



STRENGTH TRAINING

Growing daily in the things that really matter!

The Inner Man is Spiritual!

Romans 8:5-8

Men's Breakfast

Sermon given on October 19, 2019



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The Inner Man is Spiritual!

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Opening Comments

- Today we start a new series: **STRENGTH TRAINING: Growing daily in the things that really matter!**
- Turn in your Bible to **Romans 8**
- These Men's Breakfast messages are a continuation of the theme of the Men's Retreat in May
- We looked at the reality that there are two parts of us – an inner man and an outward man
- We also know the outward man as the flesh – the natural man
- That part of us has a problem **Romans 7:18-19**
For I know that in me (that is, in my flesh) nothing good dwells; for to will is present with me, but how to perform what is good I do not find.
- If we want to do things that really matter – we need to let the Holy Spirit strengthen our inner man
- While it is God who does the strengthening – He expects us to exercise our will to facilitate that strengthening
- Let's pray and then we will get into it
- **Pray**

Teaching

- The title of this morning's message is **The Inner Man is Spiritual!**
- Before we get too far into this message, I want to make a distinction between being spiritual and being religious
- Being spiritual and being religious are not the same things
- There are billions of people on this planet who are religious, but are spiritually dead
- Being religious is what you do to worship or serve whatever deity you think might help you – Buddha, Allah, or God
- To be spiritual is to be aware of, connected to, and interacting with the living Spirit of God
- It is possible to be religious without being spiritual
- God has no use for spiritually dead religion **Micah 6:7-8**

Will the LORD be pleased with thousands of rams, ten thousand rivers of oil? Shall I give my firstborn for my transgression, the fruit of my body for the sin of my soul? He has shown you, O man, what is good; and what does the LORD require of you but to do justly, to love mercy, and to walk humbly with your God?

- Just going through the spiritual motions of religion does not please God – in fact, it disgusts Him

- Here in Romans, the Apostle Paul makes a distinction between the flesh (outward man) and the spirit (inner man)

- **Romans 8:5**

- Paul is saying under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit that the things we do in this life have their source in our minds

- What you choose to say with your mouth, do with your hands, or where chose to you go with your feet or eyes is born in your mind

Romans 12:2

And do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind, that you may prove what is that good and acceptable and perfect will of God.

- To be transformed to be more like Christ – renew the mind – change what is in there

- Our primary way of doing that is through the Word

- To change what you are doing – change what you are being

- To change what you are being – change what you are thinking

- Paul warns that there is a price for not doing that

- **Romans 8:6**

- Carnally minded = death – the flesh can only produce death

- This is obviously including physical death, but also includes death of relationships, opportunities, and reputations

- And often the death of those things is slow and painful

- Paul also tells us that to be spiritually minded is life and peace

- This gives us a way to evaluate everything as to whether it is of the flesh or the Spirit

- Is it creating death or life? Is it promoting peace or conflict?

- Here is a real example from my life

- It is a truly insignificant event – but I want to use it to prove there are no truly insignificant things in this life

- I wrote this message on Wednesday – I get up before anyone else

- I walked into the kitchen and there was a bag of trash
- Being fully transparent – I was not happy to see it
- Why bag it up and then not take it outside to the trash bins?
- If I had stormed into the bedroom, woke Kelly up, and demanded to know why the trash wasn't taken outside – would that create death or life? Peace or conflict?
- So, doing that would be living according to the flesh, right?
- How about if went in and cuddled up next to her and asked why the trash wasn't taken out? Not as bad as the first way, but still in the flesh!
- What would be a better response? Take out the trash, right!
- That wouldn't necessarily make it 'living according to the Spirit'
- If I did it grumbling under my breath and resenting doing it – then my mind is on the things of the flesh – “I shouldn't have to do this!”
- Paul warns us about something else that living according to the flesh reveals
- **Romans 8:7**
- 'enmity against God' = at war with God
- As Christians, we are no longer at war with God, but we can resist the work He is trying to do in us and through us
- Everything in life has a spiritual component to it
- That bag of trash in my kitchen had a spiritual component to it
- I can't say with any certainty that God made someone leave that bag of trash in the kitchen, but I can tell you with absolute certainty that once it was left that He intended to use it
- The same thing is true with everything that comes into our lives, whether we perceive them as good or bad – God has a use for them

Romans 8:28

And we know that all things work together for good to those who love God, to those who are the called according to *His* purpose.

- Everything has a spiritual component
- And we either cooperate with God or we resist Him and do what we want to do
- Paul then tells us the spiritual reality of resisting God to live according to the flesh

• **Romans 8:8**

- I don't know about you but after everything God has done for me, not the least of which is saving my soul from hell, forgiving my sins, and promising me eternal life with Him in heaven – I want to please God
- In fact, the more my faith grows, the more I want to please God
- I don't have to, neither do you – you can stay a jerk and still go to heaven, but there are benefits to pleasing God **Hebrews 11:6**
But without faith *it is* impossible to please *Him*, for he who comes to God must believe that He is, and *that* He is a rewarder of those who diligently seek Him.
- If there is some kind of reward for seeking God and pleasing Him, I think I want it
- Also, God deserves a life that is pleasing to Him
- Everything has a spiritual component – even a bag of trash
- So how do you discover the spiritual component so that you can live according to the Spirit? Glad you asked!
- It all begins in the mind – as soon as you see that ‘bag of trash’ or whatever it is for you
- The flesh is lightning quick to respond carnally – need to catch yourself – pause and pray – remind yourself **2 Corinthians 10:3-5**
For though we walk in the flesh, we do not war according to the flesh. For the weapons of our warfare *are* not carnal but mighty in God for pulling down strongholds, casting down arguments and every high thing that exalts itself against the knowledge of God, bringing every thought into captivity to the obedience of Christ...
- After pausing and praying – ask yourself three questions about how you are thinking about responding
- First question – **Who will be glorified?**
- If I had burst in, woke up Kelly, and demanded to know why the trash wasn't taken out – who would be glorified? Me!
- I would be exalting myself as someone who is not to be offended
- Who should be glorified? God! **1 Corinthians 10:31**
...whatever you do, do all to the glory of God.
- Everything we do, including dealing with a bag of trash, can and should glorify God
- How do I glorify God in that circumstance?
- I have been called by God to serve Him and to serve those He has placed around me

- Taking out a bag of trash may not be a direct act of service to God, but it would serve my family, even if they didn't know I did it – glorifies God through my faith
- First question – **Who will be glorified?**
- Second question – **Who will be blessed?**
- Who will be blessed if I go in and wake up Kelly to ask her about trash? I can promise you; no one will be!
- How about if I just take it out?
- First, if I do that in faith believing that I am serving God by serving my family – God will be blessed
- Second, my family will be blessed because there is no trash in the kitchen
- Third, I experience the blessing of knowing that I have blessed God and my family
- **Who will be glorified? Who will be blessed?**
- Third question – **Who will grow in faith?**
- I would love to stand up here and tell you that the moment I saw that bag of trash in the kitchen my first thought was; “Praise God! Here is a chance for me glorify God and bless my family with an unseen act of service!”
- That was not my first thought – my thoughts were selfish – fleshly
- Thankfully, I didn't act on those thoughts
- I had to act in faith – first, recognize that I felt offended by the fact that the trash wasn't taken out – forgive the person who did – let it go
- Second, I had to humble myself, confess to God that I was offended
- Third, I had to deny myself and take out the trash
- And to do it as unto the Lord – without grumbling and complaining in my heart
- Everything in your life has a spiritual component
- So, no matter what comes into your life, you can ask the questions: ‘How can this be used to glorify God? How can this be used to bless others? How can this be used to grow faith?’
- Before you decide to see a movie, video, or visit a website – pause, pray, and ask the questions

- Before you respond to a complaint from an employee, your boss, a customer, or your wife – pause, pray, and ask
- Live according to the Spirit – life and peace
- Or live according to the flesh = death and conflict – choice is yours!
- **Let's pray!**