

The Carnal Mind

by G.W. North

The sermon emphasizes the importance of the condition of the mind, which determines our relationship with God, and presents the Gospel as the solution to our spiritual problems.

Scripture: Isaiah 55:8-9, John 3:3, Romans 8:6, Romans 12:2, 1 Corinthians 2:14, 2 Corinthians 5:17, Galatians 5:17, Ephesians 4:23, Philippians 2:5, Colossians 3:2

Topics: "Mind Transformation", "Spiritual vs. Carnal Mind"

Description

G.W. North emphasizes the distinction between a carnal mind and a spiritual mind, arguing that the condition of one's mind is more crucial than the knowledge it holds. He addresses the common human tendency to blame God for their circumstances, asserting that God made choices before creation that align with His love and purpose. North highlights the mystery of Israel's role in God's plan and the emergence of a new spiritual nation, which transcends physical lineage. He concludes that while the world may seem chaotic and unjustifiable, the focus should remain on the Gospel of Jesus Christ rather than on human conditions. Ultimately, transformation requires a divine intervention to change the fundamental state of the mind.

Transcript

He is, of course, referring primarily to the kind of mind a man has, namely, either spiritual or carnal; he does not refer to the amount of knowledge acquired by formal education, although he himself had been through the best schools. The mind needs to be stored with the right kind of knowledge -- that is one of the reasons for the epistle, but he is more concerned about the condition of the mind than the content of it. The condition of the mind is not changed by its content, but the content of the mind will be changed by its condition. Inevitably there is great interplay, interdependence and interaction between these, but, as with all He does, when dealing with the mind God starts with fundamental states rather than mental accomplishments. Always it is condition before function, for condition determines function. Mind, to be mind, must be functional though; if the mind ceases to function personality ceases to be, in which case there can be no life. It is therefore essential that if God would change a man He must change his mind; to do this a superior being, having a superior quality of mind, must enter and operate within, for unaided man cannot change his fundamental state of being and thinking.

There are those who blame God for everything; they see themselves as preconditioned creatures of a chance birth, and arguing from this position ask, why then should God find fault with them? They had had

no say about their coming into the world: they did not choose to be born, their entrance into the world at a certain time was not planned by them; (sadly enough, in many instances it was completely unwanted). Their parents decided their life for them in advance, and in any case is it not true that God handed the human race over to sin? 'Why has He made me thus, and why doth He yet find fault?' seems a normal inquiry. 'I cannot help being who and what I am', says the fatalist, 'everything is predetermined, and basic conditions cannot be changed'.

But the apostle will have none of it, for way back beyond all that, before personal parentage or the development of family strains and traits, before the judgement of God, and His decision to abandon the race to sin, before the creation of Adam even, God made choices. In His wisdom He conformed and predestinated persons to be as His sons, and decided and fixed the nature of these to be as His own -- God is love. There are mysteries in all this for which God has offered no explanation at all. What He did though, was to send His Son into the world and decree that His gospel should be preached to every creature. Men are baffled and embittered, they have been broken like potters' vessels, and discarded as unwanted pieces; the whole creation groans and travails in pain until now. What it hopes to bring forth who can guess? And what it will be in the end who is able to foretell? It is Paul himself, speaking in prophetic vein to the Thessalonians, who tells us who and what it shall be -- the antichrist, the man of sin, the son of perdition, natural child of satan predestined to hell. He will be king of the majority of the race, and every one of his subjects will be like him, although at present few there are who think so; men generally are too preoccupied with today to think about the future.

This tragic world condition is further complicated by the mystery of Israel; it seems to affect everything. This nation of destiny, through which God brought salvation into the world, has failed both God and man but, and herein is love, God did not cast it off. Instead, by a new birth, He has brought forth and developed from it a new nation of people drawn from every nation under the sun, a people whose nature, kinship and characteristics are not physical but spiritual. This is God's major concern in this age; He has not entirely suspended operations with Israel, but is working for them in a different way. This has created an ever-present bone of contention to the nations and is a matter of constant speculation; to the carnal mind everything seems in a hopeless mix-up, defying both rationalisation and justification. How then is it possible to explain or justify prevailing universal conditions, or to rationalize national or personal moral states? That is the overriding question, but Paul does not make any attempt to answer it, neither does God. Therefore it ill becomes us to attempt the impossible: God cannot be justified by pointing to world conditions or human states; they are not as they were originally created. Noting all these anomalies, Paul rejects the temptation to speculate, and presents the Gospel of God concerning His Son.

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