

GOD FOR US: A Study in Romans 8

Divine Hostility - Romans 8:7-8

July 2, 2017

Those who are in the flesh cannot please God - **Romans 8:8**

I. NO NEUTRALITY

- The mind that is controlled by the sinful nature is not indifferent to God, nor is it favorably inclined toward him. It is hostile to God. Hence, it leads to death, since only God gives life (Ps. 14:1-3).
- We must divest ourselves of the thought that good people go to hell (Rom. 3:9-20).
- Even the “good” acts that non-believers do are done in hostility to a holy God (Isa. 64:1-7; Phil. 3:5-8).
- Paul is describing here what we now call “total depravity” (Ps. 51:5; Eccl. 7:20).

II. NO PLEASURE

- Divine hostility goes both ways: we are opposed to God in our sin, and God is opposed to us in his holiness (Matt. 23; Rev. 3:16).
- God’s wrath against sin is not a faint flicker, but a steady blaze. It does not depict a capricious God who is bi-polar, but demonstrates the consistent righteousness of a just judge (Gen. 18:25; Job 34:22-24).
- Those who are not “in Christ” are unable to please a holy God, regardless of their charity, love, or goodwill. This is the doctrine of “total inability” (vs. 8; Rom. 7:18).

III. NO CONDEMNATION

- It is not all doom and gloom. While we were yet sinners, Christ died for us (Rom. 5:6-11).

KNOW: When our eyes are fixed on us, there is no pleasing God. There is no possible way to please a holy God when you are living according to the flesh (sinful nature). To do so is not to be indifferent to God, it is to be hostile toward him.

DO: Set aside all hostility toward God.

Recommended Reading:

The Passion of Jesus Christ, John Piper (LifePoint Library #232 PIP)

Questions/Discovery Points for Life Groups/Families

Please read Romans 8:7-8

1. What are some of the things that Paul says about those whose minds are set on the things of the flesh?
2. What are some of the things that Paul says about those whose minds are set on the things of the Spirit?
3. Why can't non-believers please God?
4. Do Christians truly “delight in God’s law”? (see Rom. 7:22)
5. How do you share this kind of truth with a non-believing friend?
6. In light of all that Paul has said, how do we, as Christ-followers, learn to rejoice? (see Rom. 7:24-25)