

## **In the Arena** *Ray Stedman*

### I. Introduction.

- A. Text: Romans 8:5-14.
- B. The Christian life is lived in the pain, dirt and sweat of life.
- C. The Christian life is the life of Jesus Christ lived through you.
- D. The test of the Christian life is whether one is different at home.

### II. The analysis of paralysis. (Romans 8:5-9)

#### A. When we are born again, we are no longer in Adam—we are in Christ.

1. All things become new in Christ.
2. Self-interest was behind all our motives before Christ.
3. Abiding with Christ is walking with the Spirit.
4. It is still possible to walk according to the flesh after Christ though.
5. The things of the Spirit and the things of the flesh cover all areas of life.
6. The mind of the Spirit is relating everything to God.

#### B. The practical results.

1. The mind set on the flesh is death.
2. The mind set on the Spirit is peace.
3. The mind of the flesh is hypocrisy.
4. The mind of the flesh is self-effort trying to please God. God hates self-effort when He has provided the strength through the indwelling Spirit. (Ezekiel 44)

### III. The possibility of maturity. (Romans 8:10-14)

#### A. There is a difference between those walking according to the flesh and being in the flesh.

1. The first are Christians who are struggling.
2. The second are non-Christians still identified with Adam.
3. When you were not a Christian, your deeds were worthless as far as God is concerned.

- 4. If the indwelling Spirit is in you, you have the immediate possibility of obedience.
- B. We recognize all our self-effort to be worthless in Christ Jesus.
- C. Only when we begin to let Jesus Christ work through us do we pass from carnality to maturity.
  - 1. We are the children of God the minute we believe.
  - 2. We have no right to be called the sons of God until we learn to depend on God.
- D. The great need of the hour is that God would make Christians dangerous.

**Application questions:**

1. What does it mean to be “in Christ?”

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2. Why does God hate self-effort?

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3. How have you experienced the mind of the Spirit in your struggles? What does it look like?

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