

The Spirit Brings Life

The great Apostle Paul wrote about the confidence he and his fellows had in their ministries of the Kingdom of God:

“We are sure about all this. Christ makes us sure in the very presence of God. We don’t have the right to claim that we have done anything on our own. God gives us what it takes to do all that we do. He makes us worthy to be the servants of His new agreement that comes from the Holy Spirit and not from a written Law. After all, the Law brings death, but the Spirit brings life.” (2 Corinthians 3:4-6, CEV)

God’s Words of Scripture remind us of both His holiness and His holy standards for us. The Law of God, as revealed through Moses, is good. It teaches us right from wrong. It helps us live healthy lives. And it introduced a revolutionary code of justice and fairness to the ancient world. The Law of God is good. Is it demanding? Yes! But it is good and right.

Sadly, people have never been able to keep God’s Law well at all. People are so bad at obeying that Paul could write, “the Law brings death.” We can’t keep it. And we sin against God in our failure to keep it. The letter kills because it makes us aware of the deadly results of our sin and convicts us of our rebellion to the will of our Father in heaven.

“Obviously, the law applies to those to whom it was given, for its purpose is to keep people from having excuses, and to show that the entire world is guilty before God. For no one can ever be made right with God by doing what the law commands. The law simply shows us how sinful we are.” (Romans 3:19-20 NLT)

Thankfully, through Jesus and His death and resurrection we are brought to a new place. What the Law could not accomplish in us, faith in Jesus provides. God saves us not on the basis of our ability to obey the law, but according to Jesus’ perfection on our behalf and our trust in Him. When we connect with Jesus through faith and baptism we come to have a new life in the Spirit.

Filled with the Holy Spirit, we are transformed and empowered to be new persons, redeemed persons, saved by grace and empowered by the Holy Spirit to find life and live a life that honors our Father. Did you get that? The freedom of grace gives us what the Law cannot—the freedom to obey God. That is, obey Him out of Spirit-empowered thankfulness, rather than guilt driven law-keeping.

“For the grace of God that brings salvation has appeared to all men. It teaches us to say ‘No’ to ungodliness and worldly passions, and to live self-controlled, upright and godly lives in this present age, while we wait for the blessed hope—the glorious appearing of our great God and Savior, Jesus Christ, who gave Himself for us to redeem us from all wickedness and to purify for Himself a people that are His very own, eager to do what is good.” (Titus 2:11-14)

Only through the Holy Spirit in us are we deemed worthy by faith to serve God. *“After all, the Law brings death, but the Spirit brings life.”*

A Prayer

O Father God, our confidence is in Christ, who died for our sins, and who was raised for our righteousness and now has filled us and empowered us with His Holy Spirit. We thank you for the ability to obey and serve you through the freedom of grace and the life-giving Spirit. May our words, our thoughts, our hearts, and our lives show Jesus as we seek to share Him with others. It is in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ that we pray. Amen.

Scott