

THE HOLY SPIRIT AT WORK

2 Corinthians 3:1-18

KINGDOM DISCIPLES BEING PRODUCED IS EVIDENCE OF THE HOLY SPIRIT'S WORK IN A CHURCH

- *"Are we beginning to commend ourselves again? Or do we need, like some, letters of recommendation to you or from you? 2 You yourselves are our letter, written on our hearts, known and read by everyone. 3 You show that you are Christ's letter, delivered by us, not written with ink but with the Spirit of the living God—not on tablets of stone but on tablets of human hearts."* (2 Corinthians 3:1-3)
- **The greatest evidence of a Spirit-filled church isn't what happens in the room, it's what happens in the lives of the people who leave the room.**
- **"If no one is being changed at a local church, then the ministry taking place there lacks validation. A church's goal is...the life-transforming work of producing kingdom disciples." – Dr. Tony Evans**

OUR CONFIDENCE SHOULD BE IN GOD RATHER THAN SELF

- *"Such is the confidence we have through Christ before God. 5 It is not that we are competent in ourselves to claim anything as coming from ourselves, but our adequacy is from God. 6 He has made us competent to be ministers of a new covenant, not of the letter, but of the Spirit. For the letter kills, but the Spirit gives life."* (2 Corinthians 3:4-6)
- **Our greatest confidence isn't found in what we can do for God, but in what God can do through us.**
- **The goal isn't to become more confident in ourselves, but more convinced that God is sufficient for whatever He calls us to face**

THE GLORY OF THE NEW COVENANT ECLIPSES THE GLORY OF THE OLD COVENANT

- *"Now if the ministry that brought death, chiseled in letters on stones, came with glory, so that the Israelites were not able to gaze steadily at Moses's face because of its glory, which was set aside, 8 how will the ministry of the Spirit not be more glorious? 9 For if the ministry that brought condemnation had glory, the ministry that brings*

righteousness overflows with even more glory. 10 In fact, what had been glorious is not glorious now by comparison because of the glory that surpasses it. 11 For if what was set aside was glorious, what endures will be even more glorious." (2 Corinthians 3:7-11)

- **The Law could show us what was wrong with us, but only Jesus could make us right with God.**
- **The old covenant revealed our need for a Savior, while the new covenant reveals the Savior who meets our need.**
- **The old covenant could not save us, but the new covenant in Christ redeems us and guarantees our eternal inheritance forever.**

THE FREEDOM WE RECEIVE IN CHRIST IS TO BE TRANSFORMED INTO HIS IMAGE THROUGH OUR ATTITUDE, ACTIONS, AND CHARACTER

- *"12 Since, then, we have such a hope, we act with great boldness. 13 We are not like Moses, who used to put a veil over his face to prevent the Israelites from gazing steadily until the end of the glory of what was being set aside, 14 but their minds were hardened. For to this day, at the reading of the old covenant, the same veil remains; it is not lifted, because it is set aside only in Christ. 15 Yet still today, whenever Moses is read, a veil lies over their hearts, 16 but whenever a person turns to the Lord, the veil is removed. 17 Now the Lord is the Spirit, and where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is freedom. 18 We all, with unveiled faces, are looking as in a mirror at the glory of the Lord and are being transformed into the same image from glory to glory; this is from the Lord who is the Spirit."* (2 Corinthians 3:12-18)
- **Jesus didn't set us free so we could simply live however we want; He set us free so the Spirit could transform us into who we were created to be.**
- **Freedom in Christ isn't freedom to remain the same, it's freedom to become more like Jesus.**
- **The goal of following Jesus isn't simply a changed destination after death, but a transformed life before death.**
- **"The Holy Spirit doesn't just remove the veil from our eyes; He transforms the person behind it."**

CONNECT GROUP DISCUSSION

ADDITIONAL NOTES

Opening Question: When you hear the phrase “Spirit-filled Christian,” what characteristics or qualities immediately come to mind?

Observation:

- What does Paul call his “letter of recommendation,” and who does he say is responsible for writing it? (vss. 1-3)
- What does Paul say about the source of his confidence and competence in verses 4–6?
- What contrasts does Paul make between the old and new covenants in verses 7–11?
- What happens when someone turns to the Lord, and what ongoing work does the Holy Spirit perform in the believer’s life? (vss. 16-18)

Understanding

- Why can it be tempting to measure spiritual success by attendance, accomplishments, programs, titles, or other visible results? What evidence of genuine spiritual transformation should we be looking for instead?
- If someone observed your life Monday through Saturday, what evidence would they see that the Holy Spirit is changing you? Where would you like that evidence to become stronger?
- Where are you most tempted to rely on your own abilities, experience, resources, or strength?
- Why is simply knowing God's standards insufficient to transform a person's heart?
- What is the difference between trying harder to become a better Christian and allowing the Holy Spirit to transform you?
- When you compare yourself today with who you were earlier in your walk with Christ, where can you see evidence that the Holy Spirit has changed your attitudes, actions, priorities, or character?
- What is one area of your life that you sense the Holy Spirit calling you to surrender more completely to Him? What specific action can you take this week in response?

Loving Outward:

- Who do you need to share the gospel with this week?
- Who do you need to follow-up with regarding the gospel?
- Who are you bringing to church next Sunday?

This image shows a single sheet of white paper with horizontal blue ruling lines. The lines are evenly spaced and run across the width of the page. There are no margins, text, or other markings on the paper.