

Transformed by Grace
2 Cor. 3:1-18

"A legalistic ministry brings death. Preachers who major on rules and regulation keep their congregations under a dark cloud of guilt, and this kills their joy, power, and effective witness for Christ. Christians who are constantly measuring each other, comparing 'results,' and competing with each other, soon discover that they are depending on the flesh and not the power of the Spirit. There never was a standard that could transform a person's life, and that includes the Ten Commandments. Only the grace of God, ministered by the Spirit of God, can transform lost sinners into living epistles that glorify Jesus Christ." Weirsbe

- I. The Corinthian believers were indeed Paul's letter of recommendation from Jesus Christ. It wasn't Paul who wrote the letter, Jesus did. If Jesus has written his letter of grace on your heart, then it is clear, concise and legible. When he writes on someone's heart "saved by grace" then his or her heart has been changed by grace. Legalism can't change a person's heart, religiosity can't do that, rules and regulations can't do that, only Jesus can transform us into his image through the power of the Holy Spirit.

2 Cor. 3:1-6
Ezek. 26:36

"Our sufficiency is of God; let us practically enjoy this truth. We are poor, leaking vessels, and the only way for us to keep full is to put our pitcher under the perpetual flow of boundless grace. Then, despite its leakage, the cup will always be full to the brim." Spurgeon

Titus 3:4-6 *But when the kindness and love of God our Savior appeared, he saved us, not because of righteous things we had done, but because of his mercy. He saved us through the washing of rebirth and renewal by the Holy Spirit, whom he poured out on us generously through Jesus Christ our Savior,*

- II. We have all been commissioned by Christ himself to the ministry of righteousness so that we can reflect his glory before others. We are to show it, live it and express it well in the church, in our personal lives and out in the world. It is our responsibility to live our faith according to his terms, i.e., his righteousness, and when we do that, we are expressing the glory of his righteousness in ways that change people's lives.

2 Cor. 3:7-16
Romans 7:5-6
Romans 8:1-4

- III. The Holy Spirit is the one who transforms us into the likeness of Christ. Man, and his rules or whatever else he might throw at us through Satan, does not have that kind of power. It is of utmost importance that we look to Jesus alone to transform us into his likeness with ever increasing glory so that we can become the aroma of Christ among those who are being saved (2 Cor. 2:15).

2 Cor. 3:16-17
Psalm 25:15
Hebrews 12:1-2

John 8:36 *So if the Son sets you free, you will be free indeed.*

"If I could just get across to you the word that the Holy Spirit quietly speaks to you it would be: 'Give up the struggle and fight; relax in the omnipotence of the Lord Jesus; look up into his lovely face and as you behold Him, He will transform you into His likeness. You do the beholding – He does the transforming. There is no short-cut to holiness.'" Redpath