

The Life-Giving Spirit

Scripture Reading — Romans 8:9-11

Even though your body is subject to death because of sin, the Spirit gives life because of righteousness. — Romans 8:10

The Spirit gives life, and he comes to live inside us. The Spirit gives energy, like a wind that carries us along. The Spirit brings refreshment, like a new breath within us so that our spiritual lungs are bursting with the fresh air of God. We are motivated, dynamic, filled with enthusiasm.

In our new life in Christ we are no longer in slavery to trying to keep the law (Romans 8:1-4). Because of Christ's finished work we are credited with his righteousness (Romans 3-4). As Paul puts it, "even though your body is subject to death because of sin, the Spirit gives life because of righteousness"—that is, because of the righteousness of Christ.

The life-giving Spirit gives us freedom. "Where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is freedom" (2 Corinthians 3:17). In fact, life in the Spirit is getting better all the time because we are gradually being transformed to become more and more like Christ (2 Corinthians 3:18).

So we should never give in to the danger of legalism. Trying to live by the law instead of living by the Spirit can easily creep into our lives. Some years ago, when I had the opportunity to preach in Moscow, a man rushed forward insisting that I should not be allowed to preach because I was not wearing a suit. But later, in the middle of my sermon, a woman rushed forward to surrender her life to God for the first time. Don't let legalism confuse your spirituality. Instead, live in the freedom of the Holy Spirit.

Prayer

Life-giving Spirit, fill us with the abundant life of freedom in Christ Jesus. Amen.

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