

The Ministry of the Spirit – Part 1

Introduction and Review

- God controls the progress & effectiveness of the gospel in any place (2:12) – “a door was opened for me in the Lord”
- Gospel ministry involves stress & anxieties that affect important decisions in ministry (2:13) – “So I took leave of them...”
- Regardless of our weaknesses, failures or troubles, the gospel of Christ is always victorious (2:14-16a; Is. 55:8-11)
- A believer’s involvement in the eternal life & death of another person is an overwhelming responsibility that must be taken seriously (2:16b-17)

I. Character from the Ministry of the Spirit (v. 1-6)

A. Commendable (v. 1-3)

Effective gospel ministry is revealed by changed lives & the godly character of true believers (v. 1-2). Every true believer is a testimony of the power of the gospel (v. 3; Rom. 1:16) – “you are a letter from Christ...”.

B. Confidence (v. 4-6a)

God gives the believer confidence that His will shall be done in the gospel ministry (v. 4). God gives confidence that the believer is able (competent) to do His will in the gospel ministry (v. 5-6a). The ability comes from the Holy Spirit, not the believer

The ministry of the Spirit gives living converts & godly confidence.

II. Contrast with the Ministry of the Spirit (v. 6b-11)

A. The letter (old covenant)

*The letter (law) is holy & good (Rom. 7:12). PURPOSE = It specifies God’s perfect demands & punishment for disobedience – **death** (Gal. 3:10; Rom. 6:23a; 7:10; 2Co. 3:6b) Salvation by the law is a ministry of **death** (v. 7) & **condemnation** (v. 9a) brought to an end by Christ (v. 7d, 11a; Rom. 8:1-4).*

B. The Spirit (new covenant)

The Holy Spirit works internally in the heart (v. 3b), gives eternal life (v. 6b), gives righteousness (v. 9b) & brings eternal glory (v. 8, 10-11).

The ministry of the Spirit gives eternal life, righteousness & glory!