



Dear brethren,

The peace of God

This letter is to remind our brethren that we need to produce fruit for the honor and glory of God. The fruit of the Spirit leads to sanctification, and through sanctification we do good works that please God.

Before the Lord Jesus revealed Himself, John the Baptist was already preaching the baptism of repentance:

*“And saying, Repent ye: for the kingdom of heaven is at hand.”* (Mathew 3:2)

After the baptism, he said:

*“Bring forth therefore fruits meet for repentance:”* (Mathew 3:8)

*“I indeed baptize you with water unto repentance: but he that cometh after me is mightier than I, whose shoes I am not worthy to bear: he shall baptize you with the Holy Ghost, and with fire:”* (Mathew 3:11)

Those baptized by John didn't experience the Holy Spirit (Acts 19:4) since it was sent only after the Lord Jesus ascended to heaven. The fruits of the Spirit manifested in their lives only after they received the Holy Spirit in the first dispensation on the day of Pentecost.

When the disciples in Jerusalem heard that some in Samaria had received the Word of God, they sent Peter and John, who prayed for them to receive the Holy Spirit. They had only been baptized in the Name of the Lord Jesus and the Holy Spirit had not manifested in any of them. When Peter and John laid their hands on them, they received the Holy Spirit.

Paul wrote to the Romans:

*“For when ye were the servants of sin, ye were free from righteousness. What fruit had ye then in those things whereof ye are now ashamed? for the end of those things is death. But now being made free from sin, and become servants to God, ye have your fruit unto holiness, and the end everlasting life.”* (Romans 6:20-22)

In his epistle to the Galatians, Paul wrote: *“This I say then, Walk in the Spirit, and ye shall not*



*fulfill the lust of the flesh*” (Galatians 5:16). After we believe in the Lord Jesus and accept Him as our Savior, we become a new creature under God, and the Holy Spirit begins to work in our lives to produce spiritual fruits. This new life is demonstrated by the fruits we produce, whose virtues are love, joy, peace, longsuffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness and temperance (Galatians 5:22-23). Therefore, the fruit of the Spirit leads us to sanctification.

### **GOOD WORKS THAT PLEASE GOD**

Sanctification produces the good works that please God; without sanctification no one will see God. But salvation is through faith and the grace of the Lord Jesus.

Mankind’s nature and conscience allows him to know good works from bad works. This understanding originates in Adam, whose sin gave him the knowledge of good and evil. Human beings are born destitute of the glory of God, and under the condemnation of sin, as Paul wrote to the Romans:

*“For all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God;”* (Romans 3:23)

And, also:

*“As it is written, There is none righteous, no, not one: There is none that understandeth, there is none that seeketh after God. They are all gone out of the way, they are together become unprofitable; there is none that doeth good, no, not one.”* (Romans 3:10-12)

The good works that sinners do come from their conscience, because they naturally know what is good and what is evil. Jesus said:

*“If ye then, being evil, know how to give good gifts unto your children, how much more shall your Father which is in heaven give good things to them that ask him?”* (Mathew 7:11)

These good works above alone don’t have the power to save since both the good and evil works come from human emotions, without the need to have faith in the Lord or his Grace.

For example, a bad person can do good things for his children or do philanthropic work. But when motivated by vainglory or social recognition, it is different from what God intended. As is written:



*“And though I bestow all my goods to feed the poor, and though I give my body to be burned, and have not charity, it profiteth me nothing.” (1 Corinthians 13:3)*

But the good works that God desires, according to the Word, are those that come from the transforming grace through faith. Only through faith we can please God. As Paul wrote:

*“That in the ages to come he might shew the exceeding riches of his grace in his kindness toward us through Christ Jesus. For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God: Not of works, lest any man should boast. For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them.” (Ephesians 2: 7-10)*

Good works do not save us, but they are the result of our salvation. We don't do good works to receive salvation - we do them because we are saved through faith in Jesus Christ.

The apostle James wrote that faith without works is dead (James 2:17). True good works are not those that are driven by the good intentions of man, but rather, those that are clothed in the righteousness of Christ. He is the Author and Finisher of our faith. We should not perform works of mercy expecting praise from men – this is hypocrisy before God (Matthew 6:2).

No one should be deceived by thinking that doing good social works or other acts of kindness is a reason for salvation. We however, demonstrate our close communion with God by the fruits of the Spirit, which are good works done by faith. Salvation comes only through the grace of the Son of God and cannot be earned based on the merits of any man or woman.

Your Brothers in Christ,

**Council of Senior Elders**