

useful for convincing of sin, not for producing righteousness.

Thus the operation of the law with regard to justification and holiness has been fully examined and set in a clear light. It does not produce righteousness, but exacts it. It cannot be linked with Christ as a means of justification: "If righteousness is by the law, Christ is dead in vain." Man ought surely to have kept the commandments of God, but that is not the real question. Man has not kept them, therefore upon that ground he is lost: Christ, on the other hand, brings salvation because we are guilty.

Then, as to holiness: it is not God's way to seek to produce holiness in the flesh through the law, for the flesh is not subject to the law, neither indeed can be. God gives a new life in Christ, and the Holy Spirit, to produce fruits which are acceptable to Him; and against these fruits there is certainly no divine law. God cannot condemn the fruits of His own Spirit. It is the new creature, the new life, with its fruits by the Spirit, which are acceptable to God; it is this new creature which seeks to please Him.

Strengthened by the Spirit, and instructed by Him according to the wisdom of God set forth in the word, let us seek to walk in the footsteps of Christ, that perfect example of the life of God in a Man which has been given to us.