

(Clip) The Letter Kills

by John Piper

This sermon delves into the concept that while the letter, whether of the law or the gospel, can bring death, it is the Holy Spirit that brings life. It explores how the message of the gospel can be perceived differently by individuals, either leading to spiritual death or spiritual life based on their response to it.

Scripture: 2 Corinthians 3:6, 2 Corinthians 2:15, Romans 8:6, John 6:63

Topics: "Holy Spirit", "Spiritual Life vs. Spiritual Death"

Description

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Transcript

I think the answer to the first question, why did you use the word letter instead of law or commandment, is because Paul knows it's not just the law that kills. He said the letter kills the basic building block of words and phrases and sentences and paragraph kills. Shakespearean plays kill, Greek plays kill, philosophy treatises kill, books about coronavirus kill, sermons preached by apostles kill.

They're all made of letters and they all kill. To which you should respond, probably, whoa, that's going too far, because you're turning the text right on its head. If you say that the gospel that the apostles preached kills, what about nine verses earlier when we read this? We gospel preaching apostles are the aroma of Christ to God among those who are being saved and among those who are perishing.

To the one, a fragrance from death to death. To the other, a fragrance from life to life. Who is sufficient for these things? That's 2 Corinthians 2 15 and 16.

In other words, some people smell the aroma of the gospel as a toxic stumbling block, a noxious foolishness, and they die when they hear it. The gospel itself becomes for them a fragrance from death to death. It meets a dead heart and leads to death.

But where the Holy Spirit does his life-giving work, then the gospel is fragrance from life to life. The letter kills, the letter of the law kills, the letter of the gospel kills. But where the spirit is, there's life.

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