

Read: Romans 8:1-10

The Spirit Helps Us Live in Obedience

Romans 8:5-6

Those who live according to the flesh have their minds set on what the flesh desires; but those who live in accordance with the Spirit have their minds set on what the Spirit desires. The mind governed by the flesh is death, but the mind governed by the Spirit is life and peace.

In the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit. Amen.

As you grow up, you need help. You need help eating. You need help with changing your diapers. You need help getting dressed. You need help learning to crawl and then walk. You need help to cross a street. You need lots of help. We all do as we grow up, so who provides that help? Mom or Dad, grandmas or grandpas, aunts, uncles, friends, teachers—they all help us learn what we need to do every day as we grow up and live our lives.

There's one more thing you need help with. You need help to live as *God* wants you to live. You need help to obey and serve him. You see, from the moment our lives begin, we are all *hostile* toward God.

It means we are like a rebellious child that wants his freedom and hates the rules. If God says, "Go right," he will go left. If God says, "Talk nice," he will reply with sarcasm.

We need help. Thankfully, help is on the way! Like Mom or Dad helping us learn how to move or get dressed or eat, God sends help for us. He sends the Holy Spirit to help us. Now the Holy Spirit doesn't come to help us in a dream or through our imagination. No, he comes to help us through God's Word, through the waters of Baptism, and through the bread and wine of Holy Communion. He creates faith in our hearts as we hear and learn about Jesus our Savior who came to help us with the problem of our sin by forgiving us of all our sins. Through that faith, he makes us holy and gives us life with Jesus that lasts forever.

Now through faith in Jesus, God's Holy Spirit works in us a new way of thinking. He helps us love to obey God's will. He helps us want to obey God's will. He helps us be able to obey God's will at home, at school, in the neighborhood, at church, at work, everywhere. We could never do any of that on our own, but every day through faith, the Holy Spirit helps us live in thankful, willing obedience to our God.

The questions below are to help families discuss this devotion. The questions are divided by age group as suggestions, but anyone could reflect on any of the questions as they desire.

Questions for the Younger Children

- Name two people who help you every day.
- Who does God send to help you do what God wants you to do?

Questions for Elementary Age Children

- Why is it impossible for any of us to obey God's will on our own?
- What does the Holy Spirit use to create and strengthen faith in your heart?

Questions for Middle School and Above

- How do you respond to someone who says, "People are basically good and will do the right thing"?
- What does the apostle Paul mean when he writes, "The mind governed by the flesh is death, but the mind governed by the Spirit is life and peace?"

Closing Prayer:

O Holy Spirit, strengthen our faith in Jesus every day. Help us to love God. Help us to want to obey his will, and help us to be able to obey his will all our lives. Amen.

Hymn: CW 185:1,2 – O Holy Spirit, Grant Us Grace

O Holy Spirit, grant us grace that we our Lord and Savior
In faith and fervent love embrace and truly serve him ever,
So that when death is near at hand
We at his cross may firmly stand and there find our salvation.

Help us that we your saving Word in faithful hearts may treasure;
Let e'er that bread of life afford new grace in richest measure.
Make us to die to ev'ry sin;
Each day create us new within that fruits of faith may flourish.