

Friday, February 25, 2011 - The Work of the Holy Spirit, part 2

The Holy Spirit directly convicts, leads, directs, and edifies the human mind only through the Word of God!

Let me say to all that may read this article that there are no scriptures that lead us to believe the Holy Spirit convicts, leads, directs, and edifies by any other way than through the Word of God!

These are statements that have appeared in each of the last three lessons. Why? In the religious world, men's imaginations seem to lose all ability to think rationally when it comes to the subject of the Holy Spirit. Their emotions and imaginations seem to kick into high gear with all sorts of reckless assertions about what the Holy Spirit is telling them or doing through them.

In our last article, we discussed what the Holy Spirit doesn't do today. In our final lesson, we will investigate what the Holy Spirit does for a Christian today.

1. The Holy Spirit works in the conversion of a sinner
 - 1.1. There has never been a conversion that the Holy Spirit has not had a part in. But how is His work accomplished?
 - 1.2. Does the Holy Spirit operate mysteriously, mystically, irrationally and in totally unpredictable ways in one's conversion?
 - 1.3. Conversion Defined
 - 1.3.1. Sin causes us to be separated from God.
 - 1.3.1.1. We know all have sinned according to **Romans 3:23**, "**for all have sinned, and fall short of the glory of God**"
 - 1.3.1.2. If one dies in this condition, **Romans 6:23** tells us, "**For the wages of sin is death**", **the end is eternal punishment.**
 - 1.3.1.3. The necessity of obedience includes faith, confession, repentance and baptism.
 - 1.3.2. Change is demanded of us in the scriptures
 - 1.3.2.1. Our hearts are purified by our faith and obedience to the truth (**Acts 15:9; 1 Peter 1:22**).
 - 1.3.2.2. Repentance
 - 1.3.2.2.1. We can know genuine (true) repentance
 - 1.3.2.2.2. Goebel Music said, "If I were to give one single thought, one basic sentence, in my explanation of what repentance is, it would be this: "Repentance is a change of mind, brought about or produced by godly sorrow, that results in a change of life."
 - 1.3.2.2.2.1. Regret -- the sinner must feel regret, as he now understands his sins have transgressed God's law and he has incurred God's wrath (**2 Cor. 7:10**).

- 1.3.2.2.2. Resolve -- from verses such as **Matt. 21:29** and **Luke 15:18**, we know the sinner must change his will.
- 1.3.2.2.3. Reform -- this change of conduct is seen in the life that he now lives, that is, the fruit thereof is ever so clear (**Matt. 3:8; 1 Thess. 1:9; Acts 19:19**).
- 1.3.2.2.4. Restore -- this is most difficult, perhaps at times impossible (the one I have sinned against may be dead), but the desire and effort are absolutes. If I have stolen something, I must return it -- this is the idea herein expressed.
- 1.3.2.3. Godly sorrow produces repentance
 - 1.3.2.3.1. I.e., one is sorry because their actions are sins against a Holy God....(**Read Psalms 51**)
 - 1.3.2.3.2. **Psalms 51:4 - Against You, You only, have I sinned, And done this evil in Your sight-That You may be found just when You speak, And blameless when You judge**
 - 1.3.2.3.3. One is sorry for the price GOD must pay to have our sins removed
 - 1.3.2.3.4. What was that price?
 - 1.3.2.3.5. Christ's death on the cross
 - 1.3.2.3.6. In "godly sorrow", one is more concerned with GOD than self!
- 1.3.2.4. One must come to a point of viewing sin as a disgusting thing to participate in or do. This is how God views sin.
 - 1.3.2.4.1. Remember repentance is a change of mind
 - 1.3.2.4.2. Genuine Repentance leads to a change of conduct or reformation of Life
- 1.3.2.5. One's state is changed in the waters of baptism
 - 1.3.2.5.1. We are baptized into Christ and into His death (**Rom.6:3-4; Gal. 3:27**)
 - 1.3.2.5.2. Prior to baptism, we are outside Christ.
 - 1.3.2.5.3. Following baptism, we are in Christ (**2 Cor. 5:17**)
- 1.4. The Holy Spirit convicts us
 - 1.4.1. There is no conversion without one being convicted.
 - 1.4.2. Jesus promised His apostles the Holy Spirit. He said in **John 16:7-15**, **"Nevertheless I tell you the truth. It is to your advantage that I go away; for if I do not go away, the Helper will not come to you; but if I depart, I will send Him to you. And when He has come, He will convict the world of sin, and of righteousness, and of judgment: of sin, because they do not believe in Me; of righteousness, because I go to My Father and you see Me no more; of judgment, because the ruler of this world is judged. I still have many things to say to you, but you cannot bear them now. However, when He, the Spirit of truth, has come, He will guide you into all truth; for**

He will not speak on His own authority, but whatever He hears He will speak; and He will tell you things to come. He will glorify Me, for He will take of what is Mine and declare it to you. All things that the Father has are Mine. Therefore I said that He will take of Mine and declare it to you.”

- 1.4.2.1. In **Acts 2**, the passages tell us that 3,000 people were saved by their obedience to Jesus Christ. What convicted them? The words of Christ as given to the apostles by the Holy Spirit.
- 1.4.2.2. Every example of conversion in the New Testament shows the words of Christ being provided via the Holy Spirit to convict sinners.
- 1.4.3. He acts in the same manner today except the Word of God has been provided to us by the inspired writers as they were moved by the Holy Spirit.
 - 1.4.3.1. **2 Peter 1:19-21** – **“And so we have the prophetic word confirmed, which you do well to heed as a light that shines in a dark place, until the day dawns and the morning star rises in your hearts; knowing this first, that no prophecy of Scripture is of any private interpretation, for prophecy never came by the will of man, but holy men of God spoke as they were moved by the Holy Spirit.”**
 - 1.4.3.2. **2 Timothy 3:14-17** – **“But you must continue in the things which you have learned and been assured of, knowing from whom you have learned them, and that from childhood you have known the Holy Scriptures, which are able to make you wise for salvation through faith which is in Christ Jesus. All Scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness, that the man of God may be complete, thoroughly equipped for every good work.”**
 - 1.4.3.3. **Hebrews 4:12-16** – **“For the word of God is living and powerful, and sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing even to the division of soul and spirit, and of joints and marrow, and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart. And there is no creature hidden from His sight, but all things are naked and open to the eyes of Him to whom we must give account. Seeing then that we have a great High Priest who has passed through the heavens, Jesus the Son of God, let us hold fast our confession. For we do not have a High Priest who cannot sympathize with our weaknesses, but was in all points tempted as we are, yet without sin. Let us therefore come boldly to the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy and find grace to help in time of need.”**
- 1.4.4. We are begotten by the Word of God (**James 1:18**).
- 1.4.5. By knowledge of and obedience to THE Truth, we shall have freedom from sin (**John 8:32**).

- 1.4.6. Paul told Titus that God saved us, **“not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to His mercy He saved us, through the washing of regeneration and renewing of the Holy Spirit” (Titus 3:5)**
- 1.4.7. The Spirit convicts us through the gospel. He gave us the gospel and it unleashes Heaven’s power to save.
- 1.4.7.1. **Romans 1:16-17 – “For I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ, for it is the power of God to salvation for everyone who believes, for the Jew first and also for the Greek. For in it the righteousness of God is revealed from faith to faith; as it is written, ‘The just shall live by faith.’”**
2. Other ways the Holy Spirit helps Christians **THROUGH** the Word of God
- 2.1. He Strengthens us by providing us the “Whole Armor of God” which includes the sword of the Spirit (**Ephesians 3:16; Ephesians 6:10-17; 2 Tim. 2:1**).
- 2.2. He sanctifies by the truth, which is God’s Word (**John 17:17**).
- 2.3. He saves by supplying the engrafted Word which is able to save our souls (**James 1:21**).
- 2.4. He justifies by faith which comes from hearing the Word of God (**Rom. 5:1; 10:17**).
- 2.5. He witnesses to us by the scriptures which testify of Christ (**John 5:39**).
- 2.6. He show us the love God has for us by testifying of the sacrifice offered on our behalf (**John 3:16; Rom. 5:8**).
- 2.7. He provides for us a lamp for our feet and a light for our path (**Psalms 119:105**).
- 2.8. He provides us the blue print for a life pleasing unto God (**2 Tim. 3:16-17**).
3. The Holy Spirit intercedes on our behalf in prayer
- 3.1. **Romans 8:26-27 - Likewise the Spirit also helps in our weaknesses. For we do not know what we should pray for as we ought, but the Spirit Himself makes intercession for us with groanings which cannot be uttered. Now He who searches the hearts knows what the mind of the Spirit is, because He makes intercession for the saints according to the will of God.**
- 3.2. The following analysis is from Wayne Jackson’s [“The Intercession of the Spirit”](#) article.
- 3.2.1. **The Spirit** refers to the third person of the Godhead, the Holy Spirit, though some want to incorrectly state it is the human spirit.
- 3.2.1.1. The expression “in like manner” ties this context to the apostle’s previous discussion of “the Spirit” (**v. 23**), which, unquestionably, is the Holy Spirit.
- 3.2.2. **“also helps our weaknesses”**
- 3.2.2.1. The verb “helps” is interesting. In the Greek Testament, it is a present tense form, suggesting sustained activity. The original word is sunantilambano, consisting of these elements: sun (with), anti (over against, facing), lambano (to take up).
- 3.2.2.2. The picture conveyed is that of two persons sharing a load.

- 3.2.2.3. The Greek word for “infirmity” is *astheneia*, a compound term signifying “without strength.” The better textual evidence has it in the singular; it is a common infirmity shared by all Christians. It suggests an inability to produce a desired result (whatever may be indicated by the context).
- 3.2.2.4. While the immediate text focuses upon the Christian’s lack of knowledge in knowing “how to pray” with absolute precision, the Spirit’s function, in assisting with the entire panorama of human difficulties with which we struggle.
- 3.2.3. **“for we know not how to pray as we ought”**
- 3.2.3.1. In this phrase, our pitiful, limited knowledge of the ideal will of God is dramatically underscored. We think we have the avenue of prayer perfected, but how woefully mistaken we are. We sometimes pray for things which, if supplied, would be most harmful to us. There is much truth in the saying that “one of life’s greatest blessings can be unanswered prayers” (cf. **2 Corinthians 12:8-9**).
- 3.2.4. **“but the Spirit himself makes intercession for us”**
- 3.2.4.1. The expression “Spirit himself” is emphatic; it expresses an activity of the Holy Spirit personally
- 3.2.5. **“with groanings which cannot be uttered”**
- 3.2.5.1. The term “groanings” (*stenagmois*) denotes a sigh or groan. It is used (in various forms) more than fifty times in the Greek version of the Old Testament, and it reflects a “human lament” which suffering people are powerless to remedy on their own. For instance, it describes the anguish of the Israelite people under the burdens of Egypt (**Exodus 2:23; cf. Acts 7:34**).
- 3.2.5.2. But whose groanings are these? Though some would attribute them to the Holy Spirit, the better view appears to be that they are the Christian’s groanings, which are conveyed on his behalf by the Spirit unto God. Clearly the term refers to the Christian’s plight a few verses earlier in this chapter (v. 23), though a different point of focus is in view.
- 3.2.5.3. The context seems to suggest that the groanings originate because “we know not how to pray as we ought” in a knowledgeable and articulate way.
- 3.2.5.4. Hardeman Nichols observes: “Surely the Holy Spirit who has the ability to completely reveal the mind of God to man would have no difficulty in pleading man’s cause to God”
- 3.2.5.5. It is imperative, though, that we emphasize this point: it must not be concluded that the Father could not know of our plight apart from the Spirit’s intercession; no, rather, it is the role of the Spirit as a companion in the Christian’s life that is being emphasized. His work has been divinely orchestrated, consistent with the planning of the entire Godhead.

- 3.2.5.6. H. Leo Boles wrote: “Since [the Holy Spirit] dwells in Christians, he helps them in the act of prayer. Prayer is to God the Father in the name of Christ, and by the help of the Holy Spirit. Hence, each member of the Godhead is included in acceptable prayer”
- 3.2.6. **“because He makes intercession for the saints”**
- 3.2.6.1. The term “saints,” as used in the New Testament, is a general term for those who are faithful to God. It is commonly used for the members of various congregations of the Lord’s people (cf. **Romans 1:7; 1 Corinthians 1:2; Ephesians 1:1; Philippians 1:1**). It is linguistically related to the words “holy” and “sanctified.” It refers to a person who, by virtue of his obedience to the gospel plan of salvation (cf. **Ephesians 5:26**) and his consecration of life has become “separated unto God” (cf. **1 Thessalonians 4:3-4, 7; Romans 6:19, 22; Hebrews 12:14**).
- 3.2.7. **“according to the will of God”**
- 3.2.7.1. The Greek text simply says, “according to God.” The translators of both the King James Version and the American Standard Version have supplied the words “the will of” (as indicated by the italics) for clarification purposes. God the Father and the Holy Spirit operate in perfect unison in the interest of Christian people.
- 3.2.7.2. Perhaps it is not out of place at this point to remind ourselves that, unlike the so-called “gods” of the ancient pagan world, the members of the sacred Godhead are never at variance with one another. They function in absolute harmony.

My friends, the subject of the Holy Spirit is not a difficult one as long as we study and understand what God teaches on the subject, not what we want to believe about the subject.

I wish that I had the time, resources and abilities to provide you a more thorough understanding of this subject, but I prayer this 4 part study has given you an appreciation for the subject and will spur you on to continued study.