

THE WORK OF THE HOLY SPIRIT

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2 PART SERIES / Part 1

Text: John 16:7-11

Throughout the centuries there have been debates and misunderstandings concerning the person and work of the Holy Spirit. Some think of The Holy Spirit as an “it”, an impersonal being or a “divine force.” He is neither. The Holy Spirit is the third person of the Trinity—just as much God as the Father and the Son.

Gregory of Nazianzus writes, “The deity of the Holy Spirit ought to be clearly recognized in Scripture. Look at these facts: Christ is born; the Spirit is His forerunner. Christ is baptized; the Spirit bears witness. Christ is tempted; the Spirit leads Him up. Christ ascends; the Spirit takes His place. What great things are there in the character of God which are not found in the Spirit? What titles which belong to God are not also applied to Him? He is called the Spirit of God, the Spirit of Christ, the mind of Christ, the Spirit of the Lord, the Spirit of adoption, of truth, of liberty; the Spirit of wisdom, of understanding, of counsel, of might, of knowledge, of godliness, of the fear of God. This only begins to show how unlimited He is. --www.sermonillustrations.com/a-z

In order to consider the unlimited power and work of the Holy Spirit let us look at the various *works* of the Holy Spirit that Jesus told us that He would accomplish in our lives.

FIRST, THE HOLY SPIRIT *CONVICTS* THE HUMAN HEART (vv.7-8).

SECOND, THE HOLY SPIRIT *CONVINCES* THE HUMAN HEART (vv. 9-15).

I. THE HOLY SPIRIT *CONVICTS* THE HUMAN HEART (vv.7-8).

“But I tell you the truth: It is for your good that I am going away. Unless I go away, the Counselor will not come to you; but if I go, I will send him to you. When he comes, he will convict the world of guilt in regard to sin and righteousness and judgment.”

A. The Holy Spirit removes all doubt of our guilt from our heart.

Three major aspects of the ministry of the Holy Spirit are described in vv. 8-15:

1. To the world—conviction of sin, righteousness, and judgment.
2. To the disciples—direction and truth.
3. To Jesus—revealing him more perfectly to and through those who represent him.

The key to this first aspect of the Spirit's ministry is the word "convict" (*elencho*). KJV translates it "reprove," but that rendering is not strong enough. The word is a legal term that means to pronounce a judicial verdict by which the guilt of the culprit at the bar of justice is defined and fixed. The Spirit does not merely accuse men of sin, he brings to them an inescapable sense of guilt so that they realize their shame and helplessness before God. *—Expositor's Bible Commentary*

B. The Holy Spirit reveals to us our inability to save ourselves.

He has come to convict a sinful unbelieving world that is consequently lost and unable to save itself. As He reveals our sin He reveals our shortcomings.

Romans 3:22-23 says, “This righteousness from God comes through faith in Jesus Christ to all who believe. There is no difference, for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God...”

II. THE HOLY SPIRIT *CONVINCES* THE HUMAN HEART (vv. 9-15).

A. The Holy Spirit persuades the unwilling human heart of its need to believe.

1. The Holy Spirit reveals the evil of rejecting God’s message.

“...in regard to sin, because men do not believe in me;

2. The Holy Spirit reveals the holiness of God.

“...in regard to righteousness because I am going to the Father, where you can see me no longer;...”

3. The Holy Spirit reveals the victory over Satan.

“...and in regard to judgment, because the prince of this world now stands condemned.”

The Cross was the utter condemnation and defeat of the "prince of this world." "Condemned" is in the perfect tense (*kekritai*), which expresses a settled state. Satan is already under judgment; the sentence is fixed and permanent.
Expositor's Bible Commentary

B. The Holy Spirit convinces us of our present and future victory (vv. 12-15).

Jesus said, *"I have much more to say to you, more than you can now bear. But when he, the Spirit of truth, comes, he will guide you into all truth. He will not speak on his own; he will speak only what he hears, and he will tell you what is yet to come. He will bring glory to me by taking from what is mine and making it known to you. All that belongs to the Father is mine. That is why I said the Spirit will take from what is mine and make it known to you."* NIV

Colin Williams indicates, for Wesley the "natural man" is a dichotomy of soul and body, and the "spirit," in Wesley's words, "is the supernatural gift of God, to be found in Christians only."⁽⁸⁾ **Williams comments**, "God does not witness to our feelings or natural capacities, but creates a supernatural power of discernment. It is literally true that God creates his own 'point of contact.' "~ It is only a Spirit-given "point of contact" that makes knowledge of God, and relation to God, possibilities.

(Lodahl) (Bold added)

1. The Holy Spirit guides us.
2. The Holy Spirit speaks to us.
3. The Holy Spirit reveals God's glory to us.
4. The Holy Spirit gives us all things.

CONCLUSION

The Holy Spirit is able to move upon the human heart in ways that we often would not believe prior to seeing it take place. But He does so in a powerful way to make us aware of His presence and of our own needs. One such example is found in the following story.

Sociology professor Anthony Campolo recalls a deeply moving incident that happened in a Christian junior high camp where he served. One of the campers, a boy with spastic paralysis, was the object of heartless ridicule. When he would ask a question, the boys would deliberately answer in a halting, mimicking way. One night his cabin group chose him to lead the devotions before the entire camp. It was one more effort to have some "fun" at his expense. Unashamedly the spastic boy stood up, and in his strained, slurred manner -- each word coming with enormous effort -- he said simple, "Jesus loves me -- and I love Jesus!" That was all. Conviction fell upon those junior-highers. Many began to cry. Revival gripped the camp. Years afterward, Campolo still meets men in the ministry who came to Christ because of that testimony.

Our Daily Bread, April 1, 1993.

Reference

Gaebelein, Frank E. (Gen. Ed.), *The Expositor's Bible Commentary CD-ROM*. Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan Interactive.

Lodahl, Michael E. "The witness of the Spirit": questions of clarification for Wesley's doctrine of assurance (Article)

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THE WORK OF THE HOLY SPIRIT

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2 PART SERIES / Part 2

Text: John 16:13 and 14:15-18

The human body is a most remarkable machine. It can maintain a constant temperature of 98.6 degrees no matter what the weather is outside. Whether a man is at the Arctic Circle or the equator, his body temperature is about the same. There is an inner mechanism that makes the difference. The Holy Spirit dwells within the Christian to achieve this kind of stabilization in terms of spiritual health. Whether we face good times or bad, whether we are tempted or receiving spiritual nourishment, the Holy Spirit keeps us stable within.

--Robert C. Shannon, 1000 Windows, (Cincinnati, Ohio: Standard Publishing Company, 1997).

In our text we see just how the Holy Spirit *works* within our lives to bring about stability.

I. THE HOLY SPIRIT *COMMUNICATES* WITH THE HEART OF THE BELIEVER.

A. The Holy Spirit guides us into the truth of God's Word.

John 16:13 reads, "But when he, the Spirit of truth, comes, he will guide you into all truth. He will not speak on his own; he will speak only what he hears, and he will tell you what is yet to come." NIV

The future of every believer involves many things such as: trials, joys, but it all involves our service to Christ. The believer is never led into all truth for purely his or her own benefit. We are to use the truth to reach out to others.

“God's Holy Spirit orchestrates our lives to touch others--strangers, friends, work-related people, service-industry workers and more--if we would just open up and be ourselves. How? Be free to be in love with Jesus in front of people. Be an ambassador through whom he can introduce himself. There is a world out there, hungry and searching for Jesus and his love. Don't keep him to yourself.”

-- Becky Tirabassi, From Wild Things Happen When I Pray. Copyright 1993 by Becky Tirabassi.

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Partnership, Vol. 11, no. 2.

B. The Holy Spirit communicates spiritual truths to ensure our spiritual growth in Christ.

In John 14:26 Jesus said, “But the Counselor, the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in my name, will teach you all things and will remind you of everything I have said to you.” NIV

Spiritual growth only takes place when we follow the leading of the Holy Spirit as He leads us in accordance to the Word of God. And He always leads us according to the Word!

In Ephesians 5:15-21 Paul tells us, “Be very careful, then, how you live—not as unwise but as wise, making the most of every opportunity, because the days are evil. Therefore do not be foolish, but understand what the Lord's will is. Do not get drunk on wine, which leads to debauchery. Instead, be filled with the Spirit. Speak to one another with psalms, hymns and spiritual songs. Sing and make music in your heart to the Lord, always giving thanks to God the Father for

everything, in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ. Submit to one another out of reverence for Christ.” NIV

In Colossians 3:15-17 Paul adds, “Let the peace of Christ rule in your hearts, since as members of one body you were called to peace. And be thankful. Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly as you teach and admonish one another with all wisdom, and as you sing psalms, hymns and spiritual songs with gratitude in your hearts to God. And whatever you do, whether in word or deed, do it all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God the Father through him.” NIV

J. O. Sanders wrote, “A walk in the Spirit will of necessity be a walk in accordance with the Word the Spirit has inspired. The parallel between Eph 5:18-21 and Col 3:15-17 is significant. **The same results are said to flow from being filled with the Spirit in the first cast, and being filled with the Word in the second.** To remain filled with the Spirit, and thus enjoy His continuing sanctifying work, will mean continuing to be filled with the Word. The relationship is obvious.”

J.O. Sanders, Enjoying Intimacy with God, Moody, p. 91.

II. THE HOLY SPIRIT *COMFORTS* THE HEART OF THE BELIEVER.

A. The assurance of comfort is given to all those who will obey God.

Jesus said in John 14:15, "If you love me, you will obey what I command." NIV

Before we can go any farther and rejoice in the comfort of God we must first stop here and deal with a foundational principle—**obedience**. We grieve the Holy Spirit by our disobedience and if He is grieved with us will not be able to receive the comfort He has for us.

Milton S. Agnew in the book The Holy Spirit--Friend and Counselor, writes "Grieve not the Holy Spirit of God" commands Paul. Now, only a dear friend can be grieved. Not a stranger: he might be annoyed. Not a chance acquaintance: he might be perplexed. Not a business partner: he might be offended. Only a loved one can be grieved.

--Milton S. Agnew in The Holy Spirit--Friend and Counselor. Christianity Today, Vol. 36, no. 8.

B. Comfort is the blessing reserved for those who obey God.

Jesus continues in John 14:16-18, "And I will ask the Father, and he will give you another Counselor to be with you forever—the Spirit of truth. The world cannot accept him, because it neither sees him nor knows him. But you know him, for he lives with you and will be in you. I will not leave you as orphans; I will come to you." NIV

In the book Healing the Masculine Soul, Gordon Dalbey says that when Jesus refers to the Holy Spirit as the Helper, he uses a Greek word, paraclete, that was an ancient warrior's term. "Greek soldiers went into battle in pairs," says Dalbey, "so when the enemy attacked, they could draw together back-to-back, covering each other's blind side. One's battle partner was the paraclete." Our Lord does not send us to fight the good fight alone. The Holy Spirit is our battle partner who covers our blind side and fights for our well being.

-- Tom Tripp, Colusa, California. Leadership, Vol. 15, no. 2.

CONCLUSION

Gordon Brownville's Symbols of the Holy Spirit tells about the great Norwegian explorer Roald Amundsen, the first to discover the magnetic meridian of the North Pole and to discover the South Pole. On one of his trips, Amundsen took a homing pigeon with him. When he had finally reached the top of the world, he opened the bird's cage and set it free.

Imagine the delight of Amundsen's wife, back in Norway, when she looked up from the doorway of her home and saw the pigeon circling in the sky above. No doubt she exclaimed, "He's alive! My husband is still alive!"

So it was when Jesus ascended. He was gone, but the disciples clung to his promise to send them the Holy Spirit. What joy, then, when the dovelike Holy Spirit descended at Pentecost. The disciples had with them the continual reminder that Jesus was alive and victorious at the right hand of the Father. This continues to be the Spirit's message.

-- Thomas Lindberg, Stevens Point, Wisconsin. Leadership, Vol. 7, no. 3.

It is this presence in the life of the believer that gives us the stability that we need in order to serve Christ as we grow in grace and knowledge of the Savior.