

The Holy Spirit (part 2)

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What Does The Holy Spirit Do?

The Holy Spirit Sanctifies

“And such were some of you; but you were washed, but you were sanctified, but you were justified in the name of the Lord Jesus, and in the Spirit of our God” (1 Corinthians 6:11).

Of course, the Spirit plays a vital role in our cleansing from sin only if we use our freewill to obey. There is no coercion here, but a choice that is presented with a number of incentives (1 Corinthians 10:13, Hebrews 10:26ff). There is nothing mystical or confusing about the Holy Spirit’s sanctifying work, either, for He uses the Word which He has revealed (Ephesians 5:26, 4:25-32, Hebrews 4:12).

One of the dangers of believing that the Holy Spirit is going to give you an extra boost against temptation, entirely separate and apart from the Word of God, is that it weakens one’s sense of right and wrong. *“If one believes that the Spirit removes all desire for evil he must then conclude, if he is consistent, that all remaining desires, regardless of what they may be, are pure and holy. For example, if one, after he has been convinced that the Spirit has removed all desire for evil, desires his neighbor’s wife (which of course is sinful), he must conclude that the desire is pure and right because the Holy Spirit has removed all desires that are wrong. And, believe it or not, I have heard men use this or a similar reason to justify their sins” (The Work of the Holy Spirit, Howard Winters, p. 98).*

The Holy Spirit Leads

“For all who are being led by the Spirit of God, these are sons of God” (Romans 8:14); “But if you are led by the Spirit, you are not under the Law” (Galatians 5:18).

Again, through the message of the Bible, the Holy Spirit guides us in every aspect of our spiritual lives. Consider what Peter says, *“Seeing that His divine power has granted to us all things pertaining to life and godliness...” (2 Peter 1:3).* If the revelation given to the apostles contains all things pertaining to life and godliness, then there is no other action the Spirit can take on our behalf apart from what is revealed in the Word. He works in our lives by opening our eyes to the truths found in the Gospel, by helping us apply the doctrines of Christ, and by guiding us through the same message which has been preached to all mankind since the days of Christ, the Son of God. Through the Spirit, Paul tells us that by reading we can *“understand [his] insight into the mystery of Christ...” (Ephesians 3:1-7).*

The Holy Spirit Reminds Us

“But the Helper, the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in My name, He will teach you all things, and bring to your remembrance all that I said to you” (John 14:26).

The Bible is the crowning achievement of the Holy Spirit. It is a big part of His work in this world. There is nothing that is more important to the Spirit than revealing the truth to the hearts of men and women. *“But when He, the Spirit of truth, comes, He will guide you into all the truth; for He will not speak on His own initiative, but whatever He hears, He will speak; and He will disclose to you what is to come”* (John 16:13). *“Christians are often made to feel unspiritual because they don’t attribute all sorts of feelings and actions to the direct operation of the Holy Spirit, but the real test of a Christian is whether they really do have a relationship with the Holy Spirit or not* (Romans 8:14 *“For all who are being led by the Spirit of God, these are sons of God”). There are many people who claim that the Spirit is leading them in some great endeavor or to make some great sacrifice (not found in the Scriptures), but the people who make these claims are the same people who remain in false doctrine and opposed to God’s will on very simple subjects such as baptism. To me a study of how the Holy Spirit leads us is very convicting, and not always initially comforting, for if I am persisting in a sin, then I don’t have a relationship with the Holy Spirit (Romans 8:13). If I am practicing any of the works of the flesh, then the Holy Spirit and I don’t have anything in common (Galatians 5:16-21). How can I claim that the Holy Spirit is dwelling in me, when I am ignoring or rejecting what He has said?”* (“What the Holy Spirit Does”, Dunagan).