

Tuesday, February 8, 2011 - The Work of the Holy Spirit, part 1

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 two 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.

I had a dear friend who preached at a large baptist church in Florida until his untimely death in 2008. Among the many things that he and I disagreed on doctrinally, I once heard him say that the "Spirit moved him" to change the topic of his talk one Sunday morning. My friends, if that were true, it would go against EVERYTHING the Lord told us about the work of the Holy Spirit and the sufficiency of the Holy Scriptures.

For many years, there has been much discussion regarding whether the Holy Spirit operates directly on the heart of a child of God separate and apart from the Word of God. While numerous debates have occurred, I feel this question is easily answered if we would answer the question regarding the origination of our faith in God. Where does our faith come from?

Hebrews 11:6 states, "**And without faith it is impossible to be well-pleasing [unto him]; for he that cometh to God must believe that he is, and [that] he is a rewarder of them that seek after him.**" It is impossible to please God without faith. From where are we to derive our faith? Are we to rely on the Holy Spirit to "touch" our heart or is there some other means?

Romans 10:17 tells us, "**So then faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the word of God.**" Our faith is to be found in hearing (listening to the word through our heart as we read the sacred pages) the Word of God. What is so special about the Word of God that it is the only source of our Faith?

Jesus answers this question in **John 17:17** when, in prayer to God, he says, "**Sanctify them through thy truth: thy word is truth.**" God's word is truth! It is the basis on which our faith is built. It was given to us by God as he spoke to the writers of the New Testament through the Holy Spirit. How many times was it given? **Jude 1:3** answers, "**Beloved, when I gave all diligence to write unto you of the common salvation, it was needful for me to write unto you, and exhort you that ye should earnestly contend for the faith which was once**

delivered unto the saints.” “The Faith” talked about here is the gospel and it was delivered once!

How is the word of God able to build our faith? **Hebrews 4:12** tells us, “**For the word of God is quick, and powerful, and sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing even to the dividing asunder of soul and spirit, and of the joints and marrow, and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart.**” No other source can convict us of our sinful state except the Word of God. Paul states in **2 Timothy 3:16-17**, “**Every scripture inspired of God [is] also profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, for instruction which is in righteousness. That the man of God may be complete, furnished completely unto every good work.**” The passage says “complete, furnished completely”, that means there is no need for anything else, what was given is all sufficient.

My friends, if we insist that the Holy Spirit operates directly on the heart of a child of God separate and apart from or in addition to their hearing, understanding and making application of the Word of God in their lives, then we are stating that **2 Timothy 3:16-17** is false. If **2 Timothy 3:16-17** is false, then nothing about the bible can be considered true.

Is that what we believe? God has told us he has delivered the means by which we attain our faith only once, and it will make us complete if we study it, accept it, obey it and apply it in our lives. Paul declared that the Word of God is able to build us up and take us to Heaven if we will only follow it (**Acts 20:32**). There is no need for “other guidance.”

Those who proclaim that God speaks to them (through the Holy Spirit) ignore the clear teachings of **Acts 10:34**. Peters states, “**...Of a truth I perceive that God is no respecter of persons...**” A respecter of persons is one who receives or treats others, not according to what they are, but according to their outward circumstances, such as wealth or social position, nationality, or color, etc. All men need salvation; God loves all men and Christ died for all (**John 3:16**). There is ONE and the SAME plan of salvation for all (**Ephesians 4:4-6**), thus those who faithfully comply with the terms of salvation, which has been ONCE REVEALED (**Jude 3**), will be saved.

A second misconception is that the Holy Spirit roams the earth performing miracles. This issue is not one to be decided by the subjective testimony of those who “feel” that God is working signs today; rather, it turns upon the critical examination of the facts in the light of plain Bible teaching.

The New Testament teaches that miracles occupied a special place in God’s redemptive plan, and they have not been extended throughout the Christian dispensation.

Wayne Jackson, in his must read article "[Miracles](#)", beautifully describes the purposes, characteristics, objectives, etc. of miracles in the scriptures. He ends this incredible article by stating, **"There is abundant evidence that genuine miracles were performed by divinely appointed persons in the first century, but there is no proof whatever that such wonders are being replicated in this modern age."**

My friends, what occurs today are not miracles but the Providence of God Almighty working. Providence has to do with:

1. The Creator's maintenance of the functional balance of the natural world;
2. The fulfillment of the divine purpose in the regulation of international affairs;
3. God's special operation in the lives of those who seek to do his will.

Wayne Jackson continues in his article "[A Study of Divine Providence](#)" to correctly examine how God's Providence works. Providence is the activity of God as accomplished through law. It stands in contrast to the miraculous, by which the Lord operates independent of law. In providence, Jehovah manipulates his own laws for the accomplishment of his ultimate purpose. God respects man's free will, and he will never overpower our freedom of choice in the use of providential activity; nevertheless, the Bible clearly affirms divine activity in the providential mode. It is a process that we simply cannot explain from our limited vantage point. We accept it because of our confidence in the credibility of the biblical record.

I encourage you to read each of the articles I have referenced, and hyperlinked, as you will find no better resources on the subject.

Understanding what the Holy Spirit doesn't do, we will investigate in our final article next week, what the Holy Spirit does for a Christian today.