



THE HOLY SPIRIT

WHAT DOES HE DO?

1. CONVICTS

“When He comes He will convict the world ..of sin, righteousness and judgement” Jn 16:8-11
 Cp. 1 Thess 1:5
 1 Cor 2:3-5

2. RE-CREATES

“Born of the Spirit” Jn 3:8
 A New Creation 2 Cor. 5:17
 A New Status Gal 4:6-7

3. INDWELLS

“He (the Spirit) lives with you and in you” Jn 14:17
 “He put his Spirit in our hearts “
 2 Cor 1:21

4. TEACHES

“He will teach you all things”
 Jn 14:17
 “He will guide you into all truth
 Jn 16: 13-15



THE HOLY SPIRIT AT WORK - 1

COMMENT

1. He Convicts

Humanity according to the bible is seen to be “dead in trespasses and sin”. Its standards are not God’s standards and its acknowledgement of God is sadly lacking. On the other hand there is a residue of conscience, dulled though this might be, and there is a consciousness of some sort of God figure however dull that might be. The first task of the Spirit is to work on this dead humanity and rouse its conscience and enlighten its God consciousness. Humanity cannot do it itself. This is done by a process of “conviction”. The Spirit is the Spirit of truth and can bring conviction of truth. The truth is that humanity is breaking God’s law and that there is a penalty to pay for this - judgement. So the Spirit brings these truths to life in a human person - he “*convicts of sin and of judgement*”. The person becomes aware of God and his wayward position before God.

The conviction can be such that the person feels a deep obligation to repent and get right with God, and there is no peace until this is done. The person is brought face to face with a choice. At the same time the Spirit can bring a deep conviction of the truth that Jesus died for sin and is both the Righteous One and the One who can make righteous those who have sinned. Frequently the beginning of this process in a person is found when they observe godliness and faith in Christian. Or its beginnings may be in deep unaccountable longings for peace or true satisfaction

in life. Whatever the starting point he threefold “conviction of the Spirit” has to come at some point. The person is on the way to becoming a child of God.

2. He Re-Creates

Nothing further can be done until a person responds to the conviction of the Spirit. That response is to repent and believe on Jesus, that is to acknowledge him and enter into an obedient relationship with him. When that step is taken the Spirit produces a “*new birth*” within the person: they become truly “spiritually alive”. Sins are known to be forgiven, God becomes a deep reality as does Jesus, the Bible becomes a live book (its author is the Spirit!) and the breath of prayer begins to operate in a very natural way. The person is very much a “*new creation*”. They have a new status as a child of God, and begin to walk in conscious relationship with him. This new creation is an eternal creation,

3. He Indwells

Not only does God give us a “new spirit” but the Spirit of God also comes to dwell in us. As Paul says, “*He has put his Spirit in our hearts*”. We become a “*temple of the Spirit*”. The Spirit lives in the closest proximity to our spirit and begins to exert a most powerful spiritual influence upon us from the centre of our being. This is the core of the transformation of sinful nature into the likeness of God - it comes by the Spirit living in us. That indwelling remains powerful in our lives in proportion to our readiness to accept him and obey him - we are warned neither to “*grieve*” him or “*quench*” him by ungodly behaviour. His indwelling is the greatest gift we have as Christians.

4. He Teaches

The Holy Spirit is the starting point of all true understanding about God, about ourselves and about the world we live in. He who “*searches the deep things of God*” knows everything.

5. ASSURES

“The Holy Spirit ... a deposit guaranteeing our inheritance”, Eph 1:14
“The Spirit testifies with our spirits that we are children of God” Rom 8:16
Cp. Gal 4:6 2 Cor 5:5
2 Cor 1:21-22 1 Jn 4:13

6. SANCTIFIES

“The law of the Spirit of Life set me free from the law of sin and death” Rom 8:2
Cp. Rom 8:13

7. GLORIFIES

“We are being transformed into his likeness with ever increasing glory ...from the Spirit”
2 Cor:3:18

8. EMPOWERS

“You shall receive power when the Holy Spirit comes upon you” Acts 1:8
Cp. Rom. 8:26-27
John 15:26-27

THE HOLY SPIRIT AT WORK - 2



His teaching is beyond simple rational truth - he teaches with great conviction the fundamental truths of life which cannot be understood by merely human wisdom. His teaching has a element of “revelation” about it; it brings an awareness of spiritual truth which humanity unaided cannot reach - particularly through the Scriptures where he both brings a word to us and through us to others. The process of conviction itself is a teaching process, a revelatory process. He alone can reveal the nature of his work within each of us and give us that awareness of his presence in us.

5. He Assures

The presence of the Holy Spirit in our lives and our knowledge of that presence is the essential assurance that we have of knowing that we belong to God and that we have an eternal inheritance. So Paul describes the Spirit as a “*first instalment, a deposit, which guarantees our inheritance*” (Eph 1:14). His presence in us confirms the gospel promises: “*If the Spirit of Him who raised Jesus from the dead is living in you, he who raised Jesus from the dead will also give life to your mortal bodies through the Spirit who lives in you*” (Rom. 8:11). The Spirit in us is truly an extraordinary phenomenon, someone that we know is not us yet operating within us through all our faculties of mind, heart and spirit, doing things we could not possibly do in our natural human state. When we are conscious of this “Indweller” we rest assured of our acceptance with God.

The Spirit himself underlines this assurance by “*bearing witness with our own spirits that we are*

children of God” (Rom 8:16) and by bringing to life the assuring words of scripture concerning our eternal destiny.

6. He Sanctifies

The process of sanctifying is a process of making something clean for the purposes of God by removing the stain of sin and making it holy. Because he is the **Holy** Spirit it is the Spirit who gives us a great impetus toward godliness, and an aching conscience over ungodliness. This is the start of the sanctifying process. Then the Spirit of God further sanctifies us by giving us the power to overcome the evil that besets us: “*the Spirit of life set me free from the law of sin and death*” (Rom 8:2). We are aware that left to our own human nature sin is too strong for us - that is the law of our nature, a law of sin and death. But by constantly bringing us to the cross of Jesus, enabling us to confess our sin and causing us to look to him for strength to overcome the power of sin we find ourselves able to “*put to death the misdeeds of the body by the Spirit*” (Rom 8:13).

7. He Glorifies

This is a process in which the nature of the Spirit himself is allowed to come into our own life, take control of it and so “transform us into his likeness”, 1 Cor 3:18. Put in other terms this is “Christ growing in us”. It is a process in which the fruit of sin is replaced by “*the fruit of the Spirit; love joy peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, self control*” Gal 5:22. Learning to allow the Spirit to live through us, submitting to the Spirit and allowing him access, especially through waiting on him and through meditation in the word is a crucial lesson we have to learn. And it is the Spirit himself who teaches us how to lean back on him and let him do his work in us.

8. He Empowers

Luke was very impressed by the fact that it was the power (Gk = *dunamis* or enabling) of the Spirit that turned the early church into a very effective witnessing community. He notes (in Acts 1) that Jesus specifically said to his disciples that they should wait until they were endowed with “*power from on high*” before engaging in their ministry. The Day of Pentecost saw their empowering, a day when not only the gifts of the Spirit became evident in the disciples (see 3rd section of booklet) but the love of God and their grasp of God became huge motivating factors in their lives, giving them success against all odds that were against them. Jesus referred to that occasion on the Day of Pentecost as a “*baptism in the Spirit*”. Many have testified to such a baptism. Jesus himself received such a gift of the Holy Spirit at the River Jordan following his baptism. John records that he was told by God that “he on whom you see the Spirit come down and remain is he who will baptise with the Holy Spirit” (Jn 1:33). It is Jesus who has a ministry from heaven of baptising with the Holy Spirit. And it is to him and to his Father that our hearts should look so that we may continue “*full of the Spirit*” and always “*keep in step with the Spirit*”.