

THE HOLY SPIRIT

April 2, 2023

The Holy Spirit Convicts and Converts Sinners

- ◎ Every conversion to Christ has been a result of the operation of the Holy Spirit upon the sinner's heart.
 - But how? By what means?
 - How does the Holy Spirit exercise His influence upon the heart?
 - Does He operate directly or indirectly?
- ◎ This does not suggest man has no part! Man has free will to respond or to not respond.

◎ Direct operations of the Holy Spirit

- Acts 2:1-8
 - For what purpose?
- Acts 8:26-29
 - For what purpose?
- Acts 10:44-46
 - For what purpose?

◎ The Holy Spirit bringing men to belief through the power of the truth

- John 17:20-21
- John 20:30-31
- Acts 15:7
- Romans 10:17
- Romans 1:16
- Acts 26:16-20

If the Holy Spirit must exercise some power directly on the human heart for men to be saved, what difference does it make?

- ① 1. Based on the false concept of total depravity (Calvinism, T-U-L-I-P).
- ① 2. Destroys free moral agency and therefore human responsibility.

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- ⦿ 3. Denies God's desire to save ALL men.
- ⦿ a. God is omnipotent. No one can resist his direct power. No Bible example of any one ever resisting the direct power of God. e.g., Balaam and his ass, Num. 22:28,30; King Saul, 1Sam. 19:18-24.
- ⦿ b. Note: One can resist God's power of moral suasion, because God has given man free moral agency, but this does not militate against the omnipotency of God. Compare to a parent reasoning with a child.
- ⦿ c. Since no one can resist God's direct power, ALL men would believe if He exercised direct power on the human heart. But, since all men do NOT believe, if this doctrine is true, it follows that God does NOT desire ALL men to be saved. This is exactly what Calvinism teaches, i.e., "Unconditional Election" or Predestination of certain individuals to eternal torment and others to salvation.

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- 5. When God has wanted to influence the heart of men by the Holy Spirit, the Holy Spirit came upon selected servants who delivered God's message. When he wanted to teach and warn his people of old, the Holy Spirit empowered selected men and women as prophets and prophetesses. When He wanted to send the message of salvation to the ends of the earth, again the Holy Spirit worked through the apostles and prophets of the New Covenant. When He wanted to provide edification through teaching in the 14 early church, certain Christians were given spiritual gifts of wisdom, knowledge, and prophecy. The Spirit came upon one so he or she could be used as a servant of God to others. "But to each one is given the manifestation of the Spirit for the common good" (1Co. 12:7). Where is one example in the entire Bible of the Holy Spirit operating directly on the heart of anyone for their own conviction, conversion, or sanctification?

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- ⑦ 7. When the same action is attributed to both the Holy Spirit and the Word of God, the conclusion implied is that the action is or was performed by the Holy Spirit by means of the Word.
- ⑧ 8. Makes preaching the gospel useless
 - ⑨ a. If preaching the word will not convict the sinner and produce faith in his heart, why preach?
 - ⑩ b. Compare Mt. 3:1; 4:17; Mk. 16:15,16; 2Tim. 3:16-4:2.

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- 9. The Bible furnishes not one record of any sinner being encouraged to pray for or expect the Holy Spirit to change his heart immediately (without means).
- 10. The Bible furnishes no command to the church to pray for the sinner to receive the Holy Spirit.
- 11. If the doctrine of unconditional election is true (Calvinism), it would do no good for ANYONE to pray for ANYONE to receive the Holy Spirit, for if he is one of the elect he will be saved regardless of our prayers, and if he is one of those consigned to torment, all of the prayers in the world will not change God's eternal decree.

If the Holy Spirit must exercise some power directly on the human heart for men to be saved, what difference does it make?

- ① 12.If the Holy Spirit works independently of the words of God on the hearts of sinners, why are there no believers where preachers or the Bible have not gone?
- ① 13.In every case of conversion recorded in the book of Acts, the gospel had been heard.
- ① 14.Faith is clearly attributed to hearing the word of God, Rom. 10:17, not by miraculous and mysterious impact on the soul. The fact that the apostles were to preach the gospel that men might believe underscores this fact.

Acts 1:8

“But you shall receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you; and you shall be witnesses to Me in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the end of the earth.”

Acts 2:38-39

“Then Peter said to them, “Repent, and let every one of you be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins; and you shall receive the gift of the Holy Spirit. For the promise is to you and to your children, and to all who are afar off, as many as the Lord our God will call.”

“God has made this Jesus, whom you crucified, both Lord and Christ”

Acts 2:36

- ⦿ Jesus – approved of God – miracles, wonders, signs
- ⦿ His resurrection foretold by David
 - David not speaking of himself
 - David speaking of the Christ
- ⦿ Apostles are witnesses of His resurrection
- ⦿ Jesus, whom God raised from the dead, is exalted to the right hand of God
 - What the audience saw and heard that day

“God has made this Jesus, whom you crucified, both Lord and Christ”

Acts 2:36

- ⦿ The important conclusion is: God has made Jesus both Lord and Christ
 - Lord = one having authority
 - Master; God-ordained Ruler
 - Christ = annointed
 - Messiah is the Hebrew term
 - God’s annointed King
- ⦿ They wanted the Messiah, but they killed the Messiah

“God has made this Jesus, whom you crucified, both Lord and Christ”

Acts 2:36

- ⦿ No reason to remain uncertain
 - “Know assuredly”
- ⦿ The audience:
 - Before this sermon,
 - They did not believe they needed to do anything, and
 - They certainly would not have asked the apostles to guide them
 - But at the point of verse 37
 - Cut to the heart
 - Heb 4:12
 - Eph 6:17
 - What shall we do?
 - A question motivated by belief the Jesus they killed is both Lord and Christ

The Question & The Answer

- ◎ The question: What shall we do?
 - Asked in response to Peter's concluding statement in verse 36
 - Asked as a result of belief
- ◎ The answer from Peter was NOT:
 - You are saved already because you already believe
 - You need to pray in order to be saved
 - They already knew this from verse 21: "whoever calls upon the name of the Lord shall be saved," but that was not a full explanation of what they needed to do

The Question & The Answer

- ◎ The answer from Peter:
 - Repent – to change one’s mind
 - lit. “to perceive afterwards”
 - 2 Cor 7:10
 - Let every one of you
 - Infants? No. Those who were “pierced to the heart”
 - Ax 2:21 – whosoever
 - Ax 10:34-35 – whoever
 - Be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins
 - A Command – be baptized [immersed]
 - In the name of Jesus Christ
 - Recognition to the One whose command is being obeyed
 - Mk 16:16
 - For = “in order to”. [not “because”]
 - Remission of sins
 - Mt 26:28

“and you shall receive the gift of the Holy Spirit”

- ◎ If they obey Peter’s instruction, will they receive
 - the gift from the Holy Spirit?

Or

- the gift which is the Holy Spirit?
- ◎ “gift”
 - Ax 8:20 – “gift of God” – gift from God
 - Rom 6:23 – “gift of God” – gift from God
 - But grammatically, Ax 2:38 can be gift “from” or gift “which is”
- ◎ But consider that the “promise” of verse 39 is tied to the receiving of the gift of verse 38
 - vs. 39 – “because”

“and you shall receive the gift of the Holy Spirit”

- ◎ Verse 39
- ◎ “for [because] the promise is to you and to your children, and to all who are afar off, as many as the Lord our God will call”
- ◎ Similar “promise” language in 2:33
 - “therefore being exalted to the right hand of God, and *having received from the Father the promise of the Holy Spirit...*”
 - Jesus received what was promised by the Holy Spirit (vs.25-31)
 - This is not saying Jesus received the Holy Spirit, but He received the what the Holy Spirit had promised

“and you shall receive the gift of the Holy Spirit”

- ◎ “for [because] the promise is to you and to your children, and to all who are afar off, as many as the Lord our God will call”
- ◎ Any other promises in Peter’s sermon, especially that would apply to the hearer?
 - Joel’s prophecy – vs. 17-21
 - But did those who believed, repented, and were baptized automatically receive the things of vs. 17-18?
 - No, consider 8:15-17
 - In the Samaritans’ case, “receive the Holy Spirit” = gifts through the laying on of the apostles’ hands
 - But verse 21 – here’s a promise to “whoever” calls upon the name of the Lord
 - This promise would certainly apply to these hearers
 - What is that promise? Salvation
- ◎ So what is the gift of the Holy Spirit?
 - Salvation