

The Work of the Holy Spirit

Convicting Men of Sin

Introduction

- 1. Jesus told His disciples, before His death, that He would send the Holy Spirit to them.**

John 14:16-17 "And I will pray the Father, and He will give you another Helper, that He may abide with you forever--"the Spirit of truth, whom the world cannot receive, because it neither sees Him nor knows Him; but you know Him, for He dwells with you and will be in you.

- A. The Holy Spirit was to be a comforter for the apostles just as Jesus had been while present with them.**
- 2. The Spirit had a work to perform when he came to the apostles. As the "spirit of truth", the Holy Spirit would guide the apostles in all truth.**

John 14:26 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 things that I said to you.

John 15:26 But when the Helper comes, whom I shall send to you from the Father, the Spirit of truth who proceeds from the Father, He **will testify of Me.**

John 16:13 However, when He, the Spirit of truth, has come, He will **guide you into all truth**; for He will not speak on His own authority, but whatever He hears He will speak; and He will tell you things to come.

- 3. The work , which the Holy Spirit performed, is described by John
John 16:8-11:**
- 4. In the lesson this morning, I want to draw your attention to the work of the Holy Spirit in convicting man of sin.**

Convicting Men of Sin

We learn how the Holy Spirit accomplished his work of convicting men of sin by examining how Spirit inspired men did their work of preaching the gospel. Here are several examples:

1. Pentecost:

- A. When Peter preached under the influence of the Holy Spirit, he charged that those in his audience were guilty of crucifying Jesus.

Acts 2:23 Him, being delivered by the determined purpose and foreknowledge of God, you have taken by lawless hands, have crucified, and put to death;

Acts 2:37 Now when they heard this, they were cut to the heart, and said to Peter and the rest of the apostles, "Men and brethren, what shall we do?"

- 1) They were **"cut to the heart"**, having been convicted of sin by the Holy Spirit.

2. Stephen's Sermon:

- A. When Stephen spoke under the influence of the Holy Spirit, the Jews refuted him but in Acts 6:10 it says:

Acts 6:10 And they were not able to resist the wisdom and the Spirit by which he spoke.

- B. They then charged Stephen with blasphemy and brought him before the elders and scribes. In his defense, the Spirit convicted the audience of sin saying:

Acts 7:51

- 1) Like those on Pentecost, they were **"cut to the heart"**
Acts 7:54

- 2) They had been convicted of sin by the Holy Spirit, but unlike those on Pentecost, these refused to obey.

3. Paul's Sermon to Felix:

A. Paul preached to the Roman procurator Felix during his imprisonment at Caesarea. The Scripture says:

Acts 24:25 Now as he reasoned about righteousness, self-control, and the judgment to come, Felix was afraid and answered, "Go away for now; when I have a convenient time I will call for you."

1) Again, the Holy Spirit had convicted Felix of sin.

4. Paul's example at Corinth:

A. At Corinth, Paul faced a church with many problems. He sought to correct those problems through teaching. However, he saw that more severe action might be necessary.

1) Therefore, under the direction of the Holy Spirit, he wrote:

1 Corinthians 4:21 What do you want? Shall I come to you with a rod, or in love and a spirit of gentleness?

B. Impenitent sinners would provoke a response from Paul which they did not desire. Under the guidance of the Holy Spirit he wrote:

2 Corinthians 12:20-21 For I fear lest, when I come, I shall not find you such as I wish, and that I shall be found by you such as you do not wish; lest there be contentions, jealousies, outbursts of wrath, selfish ambitions, backbitings, whisperings, conceits, tumults; lest, when I come again, my God will humble me among you, and I shall mourn for many who have sinned before and **have not repented** of the uncleanness, fornication, and lewdness **which they have practiced**.

1) In these inspired words, there is a threatening tone.

Quench Not the Spirit

1. **The work of convicting men of sin is a work of the Holy Spirit. Paul exhorted:**

1Thessalonians 5:19 Do not quench the Spirit.

Quench: “to extinguish; put out; to cool suddenly”

- A. **In its context, it is applied to miraculous spiritual gifts, but it has application to the Spirit’s work of convicting men of sin as well.**
 - 1) **There are some preachers today that actually belittle the work of convicting men of sin.**
- B. **Robert Schuller wrote a book entitled: Self-Esteem: The New Reformation. In his book he affirms that anything which attacks the self-esteem of man is contrary to the gospel.**
 - 1) **He writes that he decries a message which will: “put down a person before it attempts to lift him up”. He further charges that Protestant Christianity has: “manipulated guilty, insecure persons by feeding them ideas that directly generate fear, lack of self-worth, guilt and anxiety about approaching God. Rebuking a sinner for his sin attacks his self-esteem and is, therefore, contrary to the work which God wants the Holy Spirit to do.”**
 - a) **This type of teaching quenches the Holy Spirit’s work of “convicting man of sin.”**
 - b) **Paul’s preaching caused Felix to TREMBLE!**

- C. Some among the Lord's church feel that gospel preaching should not make the sinner uncomfortable.**
- 1) Some think that a preacher should not "challenge one's moral condition, because this would make them uncomfortable.**
 - 2) Preaching that rebukes apathetic Christians for indifference is sometimes called "brow beating", or hammering on the people in the pew."**
 - 3) Preaching aimed at denominationalism or liberalism is labeled as "obnoxious name-calling, or negative faultfinding" which might "run off everyone who might be interested in filling their spiritual needs."**
 - 4) Some may say: "Let's not embarrass anyone because of their erroneous beliefs but build a love for Jesus and truth in their hearts."**
 - a) Could you imagine criticisms such as these being applied to Paul's preaching to Felix, his rebuke of the Corinthians, and other New Testament Spirit-inspired preaching?**
 - b) These are the types of criticisms that have the impact of "quenching" the Spirit's work of "convicting man of sin."**
- D. Preaching should not be obnoxious, or abusive mistreatment of visitors, but rather a sincere love of the truth, to contrast truth vs error in individual's lives.**

Conclusion

- 1. The work of the Holy Spirit includes “convicting man of sin.”**
 - A. Not everyone who is convicted of sin will respond by obeying the gospel.**
 - 1) Some may get upset, and turn away from the gospel in anger, such as those that “stoned Stephen.”**
 - B. However, some will realize the errors of their ways, and will want to respond to the wonderful message of Jesus, and determine to give the remainder of their life to Him, such as those did on the day of Pentecost.**
- 2. Let us never be ashamed of proclaiming the whole counsel of God to mankind. The scriptures are inspired of God, and are there for us to teach man on what man must do to be saved.**
 - 1) I am reminded of the words of Jesus as He said:**

Mark 8:38 For whoever is ashamed of Me and My words in this adulterous and sinful generation, of him the Son of Man also will be ashamed when He comes in the glory of His Father with the holy angels.

