

THE HOLY SPIRIT
His Work in Conversion of the Sinner
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Introduction

1. Faith comes by hearing the word of God (ROMANS 10:17)
2. Every conversion since the church began until now has taken place as a result of the Holy Spirit's operation upon the sinner's heart
3. This lesson does not concern itself with the FACT of the operation of the Holy Spirit, but with the MANNER of His operation --- How does the Holy Spirit operate upon the heart of a sinner in conversion?
4. Does God operate directly upon the sinner's heart to make him a believer, or does God use His word as the instrument, agency, or means, thru which believers are made?

I. The Holy Spirit Operates Through His Instrument, The Word Of God:

A. Some Old Testament examples:

1. David spoke (2 SAM. 23:2) *The Spirit of the LORD spake by me, and his word was in my tongue.*
2. (NEH. 9:30) *Yet many years didst thou forbear them, and testifiedst against them by thy spirit in thy prophets...*
3. (2 PETER 1:21) *For the prophecy came not in old time by the will of man: but holy men of God spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost.*

B. New Testament examples:

1. Peter preached the gospel by the Holy Spirit sent down from heaven (1 PETER 1:12) *Unto whom it was revealed, that not unto themselves, but unto us they did minister the things, which are now reported unto you by them that have preached the gospel unto you with the Holy Ghost sent down from heaven; which things the angels desire to look into.*
2. The Holy Spirit revealed the mystery thru the apostles and New Testament prophets (EPH. 3:1-5) *For this cause I Paul, the prisoner of Jesus Christ for you Gentiles, If ye have heard of the dispensation of the grace of God which is given me to you-ward: How that by revelation he made known unto me the mystery; (as I wrote afore in few words, Whereby, when ye read, ye may understand my knowledge in the mystery*

of Christ) Which in other ages was not made known unto the sons of men, as it is now revealed unto his holy apostles and prophets by the Spirit...

3. The word is the Spirit's instrument (EPH. 6:17) *And take the helmet of salvation, and the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God.*

4. The gospel is God's power to save (ROM. 1:16) *For I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ: for it is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth; to the Jew first, and also to the Greek.*

5. When John wrote the Holy Spirit was speaking (REV. 1:19) *Write the things which thou hast seen, and the things which are, and the things which shall be hereafter...*

6. (REV. 3:6) He that hath an ear, let him hear what the Spirit saith unto the churches.

II. There Is A Clear Relationship Between The Holy Spirit And The Word of God:

A. A syllogism (logical argument) showing that what is attributed to the Holy Spirit in conversion is also attributed to the word of God.

- 1. Major Premise: Whenever an action is attributed to a person and an instrument, it is a rule that the action was performed by the person with, or through, the instrument. (Bob hit the ball. The bat hit the ball. Therefore, Bob, using the bat, hit the ball. Thus, the premise.)
- 2. Minor Premise: Whatever the Holy Spirit is said to do relative to the conversion of sinners is also ascribed to the word of God, the gospel of Christ.
- 3. Conclusion: Therefore, the Holy Spirit in conversion of sinners exercises His influence with, thru, or by means of the word of God.
- 4. Illustration: John cut down the tree. The axe cut down the tree. Therefore, John, by using the axe, cut down the tree.

B. To prove the Minor Premise: A Diagram:

HOLY SPIRIT	ACTION	WORD OF GOD
For as many as are led by the Spirit of God, they are the sons of God (Romans 8:14).	Guides Leads	Thy word is a lamp unto my feet, and a light unto my path (Psalm 119:105).
Jesus answered, Verily, verily, I say unto thee, Except a man be born of water and of the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God. That which is born of the flesh is flesh; and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit. The wind bloweth where it listeth, and thou hearest the sound thereof, but canst not tell whence it cometh, and whither it goeth: so is every one that is born of the Spirit (John 3:5-6, 8).	Born Begotten	Seeing ye have purified your souls in obeying the truth through the Spirit unto unfeigned love of the brethren, see that ye love one another with a pure heart fervently: Being born again, not of corruptible seed, but of incorruptible, by the word of God, which liveth and abideth for ever. For all flesh is as the grass, and all the glory of man as the flower of the grass. The grass withereth, and the flower thereof falleth away: But the word of the Lord endureth for ever. And this is the word which by the gospel is preached unto you (1 Peter 1:22-25).
Not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to his mercy he saved us, by the washing of regeneration, and renewing of the Holy Ghost (Titus 3:5).	Saves	Wherefore lay apart all filthiness and superfluity of naughtiness, and receive with meekness the engrafted word, which is able to save your souls (James 1:21).
Now the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace in believing, that ye may abound in hope, through the power of the Holy Ghost (Romans 15:13).	Power of God	For I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ: for it is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth; to the Jew first, and also to the Greek (Romans 1:16).
And such were some of you: but ye are washed, but ye are sanctified, but ye are justified in the name of the Lord Jesus, and by the Spirit of our God (1 Corinthians 6:11).	Sanctified	Sanctify them through thy truth: thy word is truth (John 17:17).
And such were some of you: but ye are washed, but ye are sanctified, but ye are justified in the name of the Lord Jesus, and by the Spirit of our God (1 Corinthians 6:11).	Washed By	That he might sanctify and cleanse it with the washing of water by the word (Ephesians 5:26).

III. The Holy Spirit Makes Believers Through The Word Of God:

- A. (JOHN 17:20-21) *Neither pray I for these alone, but for them also which shall believe on me through their word; That they all may be one; as thou, Father, art in me, and I in thee, that they also may be one in us: that the world may believe that thou hast sent me.*

- B. Believers are made by reading the word (JOHN 20:30-31) *And many other signs truly did Jesus in the presence of his disciples, which are not written in this book: But these are written, that ye might believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God; and that believing ye might have life through his name.*

- C. The Gentiles were to hear the word of the gospel and believe (AC. 15:7) *And when there had been much disputing, Peter rose up, and said unto them, Men and brethren, ye know how that a good while ago God made choice among us, that the Gentiles by my mouth should hear the word of the gospel, and believe.*

- D. (ROM. 10:17) *So then faith cometh by hearing and hearing by the word of God.*

- E. The Gospel is God's power to save believers (ROM. 1:16)

- F. The day of Pentecost is a good example (ACTS 2)
 1. The Holy Spirit came with power upon apostles on the first Pentecost after the resurrection of Jesus (Verses 1-4). Through the power of the Holy Spirit the apostles were able to speak in the foreign languages native to the multitude of people who had come to Jerusalem from various parts of the world to worship.

 2. The word was preached (Verses 6-41). Peter declared that those who heard him and the other apostles preach on this occasion were guilty of crucifying the Son of God whom God had raised from the dead, and who was now in heaven at the right hand of God

 3. The people believed (Verses 36-37). As a result of the words spoken by Peter through the inspiration of the Holy Spirit, the people were deeply cut to the heart and desired to know what they must do to be saved. Note that it was not a direct operation of the Holy Spirit upon these people that brought them this understanding, but it was the result of the word preached by Peter!

 4. About 3,000 were added to them that day (Verses 38, 41) *Then Peter said unto them, Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost. For the promise is unto you, and to your children, and to all that are afar off, even as many as the Lord our God shall call. And with many other words did*

he testify and exhort, saying, Save yourselves from this untoward generation. Then they that gladly received his word were baptized: and the same day there were added unto them about three thousand souls. (Acts 2:38-41).

G. (ACTS 8) The Samaritans and the Ethiopian eunuch were taught by Philip, the evangelist.

1. (Verses 4-6, 12) Philip did the preaching in Samaria.
2. (Verses 6, 12) The people heard what Philip spoke, and believed Philip as he preached Christ. As a result, they were baptized.
3. (Verses 26-40) An Angel spoke to Philip; The Holy Spirit spoke to Philip directly. But, NEVER did the Holy Spirit speak directly to the eunuch or the Samaritans, or act upon them, apart from the word taught by Philip.

H. (ACTS 9:1-22; 22:3-16; 26:1-20) Conversion of Saul of Tarsus. Saul was told by Jesus to go to Damascus and there he would be told what he must do. The Holy Spiroit did not act directly upon Saul, but Saul had to act upon the words of truth spoken to him by Ananias.

I. (ACTS 16:25-34) Conversion of Philippian jailer. The jailer and his household were saved only when they obeyed the teaching that was done by Paul and Silas, not through any direct operation of the Holy Spirit upon them.

J. (AC. 18:8) Conversion of the Corinthians. *And Crispus, the chief ruler of the synagogue, believed on the Lord with all his house; and many of the Corinthians hearing believed, and were baptized.* Note, that these people first heard, then believed, then were baptized. Belief only comes by hearing the word of God and leads to further obedience (ROMANS 10:17).

K. In EVERY CASE of conversion in the book of ACTS, NEVER do we read of the Holy Spirit speaking directly to a sinner in any way, separate and apart from the word of God. Conversion of the sinner resulted from the sinner reading and being taught the word that was given by the Holy Spirit.

L. The Holy Spirit worked through the preacher and the preacher preached word (2 THESS. 2:13-14) *But we are bound to give thanks alway to God for you, brethren beloved of the Lord, because God hath from the beginning chosen you to salvation through sanctification of the Spirit and belief of the truth: Whereunto he called you by our gospel, to the obtaining of the glory of our Lord Jesus Christ.*

M. One is drawn to God through an intelligent process of hearing, reading, and being taught God's word. It is not a matter of a mere feeling, emotional reaction, or some mystical or mysterious action of the Holy Spirit that is "better felt than told" (JOHN 6:44-45) *No man can come to me, except the Father which hath sent*

me draw him: and I will raise him up at the last day. It is written in the prophets, And they shall be all taught of God. Every man therefore that hath heard, and hath learned of the Father, cometh unto me.

Conclusion:

1. The word saves, reconciles, gives life, converts, cleanses the soul, is the seed of the new life in Christ, sanctifies, and will be the standard of judgment (JOHN 12:48).
2. To contend for a direct operation of the Holy Spirit apart from the word in conversion is to deny that the word of God has this power (HEB. 4:12) *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.*
3. If the word of God does not have the great power which it declares that it does, then we do not need it all! And, if it does not have the power to save when one obeys the gospel from the heart (ROM. 6:17-18), then God is a liar!
4. The word of God is the Holy Spirit's instrument, or means, in the conversion of sinners.
5. The Holy Spirit, thru the word which He gave, teaches that you must Hear, Believe in Christ as God's Son, Repent of all sin in your life, Confess Christ, be Baptized (immersed) in water unto the remission of your sins (ROM. 10:17; JOHN 8:24; 2 PETER 3:9; ACTS 17:30-31; ROM. 10:9-10; ACTS 2:38; 22:16; 1 PETER 3:21).