

STUDY ON THE TEACHING OF JESUS

THE WORK OF THE HOLY SPIRIT

Read John 16:8-15

So far, Jesus has told his disciples how the Paraclete, the Holy Spirit, will benefit them. But now, He explains how the Holy Spirit will affect the world.

“And when He has come, He will convict the world of sin, and of righteousness, and of judgment: of sin, because they do not believe in Me; of righteousness, because I go to My Father and you see Me no more; of judgment, because the ruler of this world is judged.” (vv8-11)

The role of the Holy Spirit convicting sinners is clear. "Convict of guilt" (NIV), "convict" (ESV, NKJV), "prove wrong" (NRSV), "convince" (RSV), "reprove" (KJV) is the verb *elenchō*, "to bring a person to the point of recognizing wrongdoing, convict, convince someone of something, point something out to someone."

In what ways does the Holy Spirit bring conviction, according to Scripture?

Miracles

One way conviction came in Jesus' ministry and the early church's evangelism was through the miracle power of the Holy Spirit that brought a glimpse of God's immense power and holiness. After witnessing the miraculous catch of fish, for example, Peter falls to his knees and exclaims: "Go away from me, Lord; I am a sinful man!" (Luke 5:8). This was true in Paul's ministry as well.

"And my speech and my preaching were not with persuasive words of human wisdom, but in demonstration of the Spirit and of power, that your faith should not be in the wisdom of men but in the power of God." (1 Corinthians 2:4-5)

"Knowing, beloved brethren, your election by God. For our gospel did not come to you in word only, but also in power, and in the Holy Spirit and in much assurance..." (1 Thessalonians 1:4-5a)

Beloved, in our day we need the miracle power of the Holy Spirit, for it is one way that He convicts people of their sins and of Christ's power. If you've read reports of world evangelism, you probably are aware that one of the causes of the spread of Christianity in Latin America is signs and wonders (Read the book by Ed Silvano – “That None Should Perish”).

Prophetic words

A second way we see conviction coming in the New Testament is through a prophetic word.

"But if all prophesy, and an unbeliever or an uninformed person comes in, he is convinced by all, he is convicted by all. And thus, the secrets of his heart are revealed; and so, falling down on his face, he will worship God and report that God is truly among you." (1 Corinthians 14:24-25)

If we avoid spiritual gifts because they might be controversial or are earthly time conscious, we cripple the evangelistic power of the church.

Preaching and Testimony

A third way the Spirit brings conviction is by taking a sermon, lesson, or an individual's testimony and convincing a person of the truth of it in their heart of hearts. For example, after Peter's sermon on the Day of Pentecost, *"...they were cut to the heart, and said to Peter and the rest of the apostles, “Men and*

brethren, what shall we do?" (Acts 2:37). When we preach out of our mind, we have little power. But when we preach relying on the Holy Spirit to take our words and use them, we have great power.

Our righteous lives

A fourth way that the Holy Spirit uses to convict people is through our righteous lives. Peter tells us:

"Having your conduct honourable among the Gentiles, that when they speak against you as evildoers, they may, by your good works which they observe, glorify God in the day of visitation." (1 Peter 2:12)

Peter also exhorts Christian wives:

"Wives, likewise, be submissive to your own husbands, that even if some do not obey the word, they, without a word, may be won by the conduct of their wives, when they observe your chaste conduct accompanied by fear." (1 Peter 3:1-2)

Instruction and prayer

A fifth way mentioned in the New Testament that the Holy Spirit brings conviction is through patient instruction with prayer. Paul counsels Timothy concerning the role of a servant of God.

"And a servant of the Lord must not quarrel but be gentle to all, able to teach, patient, in humility correcting those who are in opposition, if God perhaps will grant them repentance, so that they may know the truth, and that they may come to their senses and escape the snare of the devil, having been taken captive by him to do his will." (2 Timothy 2:24-26)

Notice the importance of God's intervention, which is necessary because:

"whose minds the god of this age has blinded, who do not believe, lest the light of the gospel of the glory of Christ, who is the image of God, should shine on them." (2 Corinthians 4:4)

Evangelism is not only declaring the word, but also earnestly praying for the salvation of unbelievers, for God to intervene and open their blind eyes and deaf ears (Acts 26:18). Both are vital! This is a spiritual battle. In a number of places, we are told to pray for the lost and for ministry to them (e.g., Romans 10:1; 1 Timothy 2:1-6; Colossians 4:3; Ephesians 6:19-20; 1 John 5:13-15).

The Work of the Holy Spirit in the World (Conviction of Sin, Righteousness, and Judgment):

The ancient Greek word translated convict has a broader range of meaning than simply our word convict, especially as it is understood in a legal sense. It also carries the ideas to expose, to refute, and to convince. This is the work of the Holy Spirit in the world and in individual hearts; to convince and convict of these truths.

In the great awakening of 1860-61 in Great Britain, a high-ranking army officer described the conviction of sin in his Scottish town: "Those of you who are ease have little conception of how terrifying a sight it is when the Holy Spirit is pleased to open a man's eyes to see the real state of heart. Men who were thought to be, and who thought themselves to be good, religious people... have been led to search into the foundation upon which they were resting, and have found all rotten, that they were self-satisfied, resting on their own goodness, and not upon Christ. Many turned from open sin to lives of holiness, some weeping for joy for sins forgiven." (J. Edwin Orr, *The Second Evangelical Awakening in Britain*)

"Of sin, because they do not believe in Me": It is unbelief, the rejection of Jesus, which ultimately proves one to be guilty. The Holy Spirit will tell the world of the importance of trusting in, relying on, and clinging to Jesus to avoid this sin.

“Of righteousness, because I go to My Father”: The ascension of Jesus to heaven demonstrated that He had perfectly fulfilled the Father’s will and had proven Himself righteous – and exposed the lack of righteousness in the world that rejected Him. The Holy Spirit shows the world the righteousness of Jesus and its own unrighteousness.

“Of judgment, because the ruler of this world is judged”: The judgment of Satan himself means that there will be a final reckoning between God and His rebellious creature. The Holy Spirit warns the world of this coming judgment.

The work of the Holy Spirit among Jesus Disciples (12-15)

“I still have many things to say to you, but you cannot bear them now. 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. He will glorify Me, for He will take of what is Mine and declare it to you. All things that the Father has are Mine. Therefore, I said that He will take of Mine and declare it to you.” (vv12-15)

Jesus frankly admitted that His own teaching was incomplete, and anticipated the further instruction of the church by the Holy Spirit. This statement of Jesus leads us to anticipate the formation of the New Testament.

To Jesus disciple, the Holy Spirit will guide us into all truth, and this was fulfilled when the New Testament writings, divinely inspired by God, were completed. In another sense the Holy Spirit continues today to personally lead us into truth, but never in opposition to the Scripture, because God’s supremely authoritative revelation is closed with the New Testament.

“All Scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness, that the man of God may be complete, thoroughly equipped for every good work.” (2 Timothy 3:16-17)

The Holy Spirit’s ministry is revealing Jesus to us, to bear testimony of Jesus (John 15:26). He uses many different ways and many different gifts to accomplish this, but the purpose is always the same: to reveal Jesus.

Conclusion

Within the life of Jesus disciples, the Holy Spirit will:

- Guide into all truth
- He will speak what He hears from Jesus
- He will tell us the things to come
- He will glorify Jesus within us
- He will take of what is Jesus (in heaven and earth) and declare the same to us.

“Everything that belongs to the Father belongs to me—that’s why I say that the Divine Encourager will receive what is mine and reveal it to you.” (John 16:15 TPT)

“Everything the Father has is also mine. That is why I’ve said, ‘He takes from me and delivers to you.’” (John 16:15 MSG)

The Holy Spirit takes what is Jesus (which is also the Father’s) and reveal or deliver it to you and me.

