

1. The Spirit and the Word

The late Z. T. Sweeney, in his excellent little treatise entitled *The Spirit and the Word*, points out sixteen different effects which the Holy Spirit might work by indwelling the saints of God, and shows that the same effects are said in Scripture to be accomplished by the Word, as follows:

[1. *The Spirit might give us faith.* But the Word is said to give faith. Rom. 10:17]: So belief cometh of hearing, and hearing by the word of Christ. [Rom. 10:8]: The word is nigh thee, in thy mouth, and in thy heart: that is, the word of faith, which we preach. [Acts 15:7]: Brethren, ye know that a good while ago God made choice among you, that by my mouth the Gentiles should hear the word of the gospel, and believe.

[2. *The Spirit might enable us to enjoy a new birth.* But He does this also through the word.] [1 Pet. 1:23]: having been begotten again, not of corruptible seed, but of incorruptible, through the word of God, which liveth and abideth.

[3. *The Spirit might give us light.* But He does this likewise through the Word.] [Psa. 119:130]: The opening of thy words giveth light. [Prov. 6:23]: For the commandment is a lamp, and the law is light. [Psa. 119:105]: Thy word is a lamp unto my feet, And light unto my path. [2 Cor. 4:4]: in whom the god of this world hath blinded the minds of the unbelieving, that the light of the gospel of the glory of Christ, who is the image of God, should not draw upon them.

[4. *The Spirit might give us wisdom.* But He does it through the word.] [Psa. 19:7]: The testimony of Jehovah is sure, making wise the simple. [2 Tim. 3:14, 15]: But abide thou in the things which thou hast learned and hast been assured of, knowing of whom thou hast learned them; and that from a babe thou hast known the sacred writings which are able to make thee wise unto salvation through faith which is in Christ Jesus.

[5. *The Spirit might convert us.* But He does it by means of the Word.] [Psa. 19:7]: "The law of Jehovah is perfect, converting the soul." [The Revised Version gives it: "restoring the soul."] [Acts 28:27]: "For this people's heart is waxed gross, And their ears are dull of hearing, And their eyes they have closed; Lest haply they should perceive with their eyes, And hear with their ears, And understand with their heart, *And should turn again*, And I should heal them" [cf. Isa. 6:9-10, Matt. 13:14-15.]

[6. *The Spirit might open our eyes.* But this He does also through the Word.] [Psa. 19:8]: The precepts of Jehovah are right, rejoicing the heart; The commandment of Jehovah is pure, enlightening the eyes. [Acts 26:17-18]: Delivering thee from the people, and from the Gentiles, unto whom I send thee, to open their eyes, that they may turn from darkness to light and from the power of Satan unto God. [Paul opened the eyes of the Gentiles, of course, by preaching the Gospel to them.]

[7. *The Spirit might give us understanding.* But He does it through the Word.] [Psa. 119:104]: Through thy precepts I get understanding. [Acts 28:27 again]: lest haply they should perceive with their eyes, and hear with their ears, and understand with their heart, etc.

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[8. *The Spirit might quicken us.* But He does it through the Word.] [Psa. 119:50]: For thy word hath quickened me. [Psa. 119:93]: I will never forget thy precepts; For with them thou hast quickened me. [John 6:63]: the words that I have spoken unto you are spirit, and are life.

[9. *The Spirit might save us.* But He does it through the instrumentality of the Word.] [Jas. 1:21]: Wherefore putting away all filthiness and overflowing of wickedness, receive with meekness the implanted word which is able to save your souls. [Eph. 1:13]: in whom ye also, having heard the word of the truth, the gospel of your salvation. [Rom. 1:16]: For I am not ashamed of the gospel: for it is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth.

[10. *The Spirit might sanctify us.* But this He is said to do through the Word.] [John 17:17]: Sanctify them in the truth: thy word is truth.

[11. *The Spirit might purify us.* This He does also through the Word.] [1 Pet. 1:22]: Seeing ye have purified your souls in your obedience to the truth unto unfeigned love of the brethren, love one another from the heart fervently.

[12. *The Spirit might cleanse us.* But He does it through the Word.] [John 15:3]: Already ye are clean because of the word which I have spoken unto you. [Acts 15:9]: and he made no distinction between us and them, cleansing their hearts by faith.

[13. *The Spirit might make us free from sin.* This freedom, however, is mediated through the Word of Truth.] [Rom. 6:17-18]: But thanks be to God, that whereas ye were servants of sin, ye became obedient from the heart to that form of teaching whereunto ye were delivered; and being made free from sin, ye became servants of righteousness. [John 8:31, 32]: If ye abide in my word, then are ye truly my disciples; and ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free.

[14. *The Spirit might impart a divine nature to us.* But He does it through the Word.] [2 Pet. 1:4]: whereby he hath granted unto us his precious and exceeding great promises; that through these ye may become partakers of the divine nature, having escaped from the corruption that is in the world by lust.

[15. *The Spirit might fit us for glory and immortality.* But He does it through the Word.] [Acts 20:32]: And now I commend you to God, and to the word of his grace, which is able to build you up, and to give you the inheritance among all them that are sanctified.

[16. *The Spirit might strengthen us.* But this, too, He does through the Word.] [Psa. 119:28]: Strengthen thou me according unto thy word.

Thus we have enumerated about all the conceivable things that the Holy Spirit could do for a Christian by dwelling in him, and have also shown that all these things are said in Scripture to be done by the Word.

God's Spirit and God's Word go together, act together, and together effectuate the Divine purposes in the world of things and of men. This we have seen to be true in the Divine

works of creation, preservation, inspiration, revelation, and demonstration. It is true likewise in the Divine works of regeneration, sanctification and immortalization.

2. The Holy Spirit in Conversion

Conversion is "turning again" through Christ to God, turning from darkness to light, and from the power of Satan unto God. Matt. 13:15—"lest haply they should perceive with their eyes, And hear with their ears, And understand with their heart, *And should turn again*, And I should heal them." Acts 3:19—"Repent ye therefore, and turn again, that your sins may be blotted out," etc. Acts 26:17, 18—"delivering thee from the people, and from the Gentiles, unto whom I send thee, to open their eyes, that they may turn from darkness to light and from the power of Satan unto God, that they may receive remission of sins and an inheritance among them that are sanctified by faith in me." Conversion includes all changes—of thinking, attitude, desire, disposition, will and relationship—necessary to bring the once unregenerate person into covenant relationship with God through Christ. This process which, on the human side, is turning to God or *conversion*, on the Divine side is *regeneration*,—the begetting, by the Holy Spirit, of a new spiritual life in the human heart.

That the Holy Spirit operates in the conversion of sinners is not, as far as I know, a matter of dispute anywhere. As the Apostle Paul puts it: "Therefore I make known unto you, that no man speaking in the Spirit of God saith, Jesus is anathema; and no man can say, Jesus is Lord, but in the Holy Spirit" (1 Cor. 12:3). Certainly no man was ever influenced by the Spirit of God to imprecate Jesus, for it is made explicit in Scripture that the works of the Spirit are all designed to *glorify* Him. Jesus Himself said of the Spirit: "He shall glorify me" (John 16:14). Hence that any man should be moved by the Holy Spirit to anathematize Jesus, the Son of God, is unthinkable. On the other hand, it is equally true that no man ever confessed Jesus as Lord, or that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of the living God, without having been influenced to do so by the Holy Spirit. How, then, does the Spirit influence, induce, move men to believe in and to confess Christ, and to obey the commands of the Gospel?