

THE WORK OF THE HOLY SPIRIT IN CONVERSION

TEXT: John 16:7-11

INTRODUCTION:

A. Def. of “Conversion”

1. “To turn; turn about” - a turning from and a turning to
2. **Acts 26:18**, To open their eyes, and to turn them from darkness to light, and from the power of Satan unto God, that they may receive forgiveness of sins, and inheritance among them which are sanctified.

B. The essentiality of conversion

1. **Matt. 18:3**, ...Except ye be converted, and become as little children, ye shall not enter into the kingdom of heaven
2. **Acts 3:19**, Repent ye therefore, and be converted, that your sins may be blotted out, when the times of refreshing shall come from the presence of the Lord.

C. The Holy Spirit has a role in conversion:

1. **John 3:5**, Except a man be born of water and of the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God.
2. **Titus 3:5** 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
3. **1 Cor. 6:11**, 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

D. So, there is no doubt that the H.S. plays a prominent role in conversion, from Pentecost to the present day:

1. Not controversial point - all agree
2. OUR TEXT: **John 16:7-11**

- a. Jesus said that He would go away, and the Comforter would come.
- b. When He comes, He will reprove (*convict, convince*) the world of
SIN, RIGHTEOUSNESS, JUDGEMENT

TS: The only question is, HOW does the H.S. works in conversion?

I. HOW THE HOLY SPIRIT WORKS IN CONVERSION

A. The H.S. would “convict” the world of sin, righteousness, judgment.

1. Every person converted was so because of the H.S.
2. The Question is: HOW?
 - a. Not *the fact* of the H.S. work in conversion, but the *manner*
 - b. Only one of two possible ways: *Either directly or indirectly*

B. What is the MEANS by which the H.S. would convict the world of S, R, J?

1. 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.
2. And take the helmet of salvation, and the sword of the spirit, which is the Word of God
3. For the word of God is quick and powerful, and sharper than any twoedged sword, piercing even to the dividing asunder of soul and spirit, and of the joints and marrow, and is a discernor of the thoughts and intents of the heart.

C. The Bible teaches that the WORD OF GOD is the instrument the H.S. wields to convict and convert - It is the WORD that penetrates the heart and mind!

1. 1 Pet. 1:22, Seeing ye have purified your souls in obeying the truth through the Spirit...

2. Jms. 1:21, ...receive with meekness the engrafted word which is able to save your soul

3. Acts 11:4, [Peter] shall tell thee words whereby thou and all thy house shall be saved

4. Rom 8:2, For the law of the spirit of life in Christ Jesus hath made me free from the law of sin and death

5. 1 Cor. 4:15, ...for in Christ Jesus I have begotten you through the gospel

6. 1 Cor. 1:21, ...it pleased God by the foolishness of preaching to save them that believe

7. 1 Cor. 2:13, Which things also we speak, not in words which man’s wisdom teacheth, but which the Holy Ghost teacheth; comparing spiritual things with spiritual

8. John 6:63, ...the words that I speak unto you, they are spirit, and they are life

9. John 17:17

10. Mark 16:16

D. In addition to the plain teaching of the Scriptures on this point, practical experience tells us this is true, for *where the Gospel has not gone, there are no Christians!*

N. T. does not teach that the Holy Spirit directly, immediately, independently enters the heart of sinners and converts them – rather uses Word – Spirit wields and thrusts sword of Word of God and penetrates human heart.

II. SOME EXAMPLES OF THE HOLY SPIRIT WORKING IN CONVERSION

A. ACTS 2

1. The background: Luke 24:49; Acts 1:4, 5, 8
2. Recall the promise of our Lord: John 16:7-11 (explain)
3. In Acts 2, did the Holy Spirit convict? **YES** -- See Acts 2:36-37

B. ACTS 8:5, 12

C. ACTS 16:14-15

1. “Lord opened heart” - How? through the preaching of Paul
2. Lydia “attended” - (gave heed, believed, recognized)
3. She and her household were baptized

D. ACTS 18:1-8

1. Paul preached 18 mos
2. v.8- heard - believed - baptized
3. 1 Cor.4:15, begotten by Gospel
4. 1 Cor. 6:11, washed, sanctified, justified...by the Spirit of our God

E. ACTS 19:iff

1. Paul came to Ephesus; ended up staying two years
2. Remember what he later wrote to these very Ephesians

Eph. 5:25-26. Husbands, love your wives, even as Christ also loved the church, and gave himself for it; That he might sanctify and cleanse it with the washing of water by the word

F. Indeed, the facts are the same in *every conversion in the book of Acts*: there is no example of conversion in the N.T. where the H.S. ever *directly* converted anyone - made Christians out of them - without the person first hearing, and ultimately obeying, the Gospel.

CONCLUSION:

A. The holy Spirit speaks through the GOSPEL

1. To reject the Word of God is to reject the Spirit's message! Psa. 19:7
2. **Acts 7:51**, Ye stiffnecked and uncircumcised in heart and ears, ye do always resist the Holy Ghost: as your fathers did, so do ye.
3. Neh. 9:30, Yet many years didst thou forebear them, and testifiedst against them by the spirit in thy prophets: yet would they not give ear...
4. SPIRIT (by means of) WORD (Convicts. converts. influences, indwells) HUMAN HEART

B. Have you hearkened unto H.S.'s message?

1. Waiting for dream, vision, still small voice? *Confusion, misery results*
2. **ILLUS:** *Heard man on tape say, "When I was a young man up in the mountains, I would have become a Christian a long time earlier, if only someone had told me how. We never heard of anybody taking the Word of God and showing the plan of salvation."*

*Indeed, some poor soul comes to the front, two man gather around him, one man tells him "Hang on" the other says "let go" - One says "look up" the other says "look down" - One tells him "Be still" the other says "Shout" -- One says "laugh" and the other says "cry"
And it is little wonder then that confusion was the result of such.
3. Give heed to Word of God - when you hear it preached, when it pricks your heart, **THAT** is the Holy Spirit convicting you!