

Glad Tidings

“And we bring you good tidings of the promise made unto the fathers...” (Acts 13:32)

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The Holy Spirit Connection

(Jerry Fite)

Paul commands Christians to be “filled with the Spirit” (Ephesians 5:18). We might be left in the dark concerning how we were to go about obeying this command if it were not for Paul’s enlightening statement in a similar context: “let the word of Christ dwell in you richly” (Colossians 3:16). We now see the practical connection with the unseen Holy Spirit and His revealed Word. The Holy Spirit reveals the mind of God in the words we read (cf. I Corinthians 2:10-13). Letting the word of Christ dwell richly in us, we are filled with the Holy Spirit.

When we study the work of the Holy Spirit, we see a definite connection between the Holy Spirit and the revealed word of God. Like a woodsman using an ax to bring down a big tree, the Holy Spirit accomplishes His work in the hearts of people through the instrumentality of the Word. Notice with me some works of the Holy Spirit which occur through the application of the Word of God in our hearts and lives.

The Holy Spirit CONVICTS. Jesus promised when the Holy Spirit comes He would “convict the world in respect of sin...” (John 16:8). Paul

instructs elders of the local church to “hold to the faithful word which is according to the teaching that ye may be able...to convict the gainsayers” (Titus 1:9). The elders connect with the Holy Spirit in His work of convicting the sinner when they drive home the truth of the faithful word in the sinner’s heart.

The Holy Spirit GIVES LIFE and FREEDOM. Paul writes, “the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus made me free from the law of sin and of death” (Romans 8:2). The Spirit works in giving life, and the life is characterized as being one that is free from the bondage of sin. The law of the Spirit of life is communicated through the Word. Jesus said, it is not the flesh, but “it is the spirit that gives life...the words that I have spoken unto you are spirit, and are life” (John 6:63). The words spoken not only give life, but if you abide in the Lord’s word, you shall “know the truth and the truth shall make you free” (John 8:31-32).

The Holy Spirit SANCTIFIES. Peter speaks of God’s foreknowledge “in sanctification of the Spirit” (I Peter 1:2). Jesus asked the Father to “sanctify” His apostles “in the truth”

and added, “thy word is truth” (John 17:17). We connect with the sanctifying work of the Holy Spirit and the truth when we submit in obedience to the Word. The Corinthians were “washed,” “sanctified” and “justified” in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ and in the Spirit of our God” when they submitted to baptism through the authority of God (cf. I Corinthians 6:11, Acts 18:8).

The Holy Spirit STRENGTHENS. Paul’s prayer for the Christians in Ephesus is that they “may be strengthened with power through the Spirit in the inward man” (Ephesians 3:16). John reminds us our inward strength is connected to the word of God: “I have written unto you young men, because ye are strong, and the word of God abideth in you and ye have overcome the evil one” (I John 2:14).

Remember, the Spirit works, and we connect with His spiritual work through a working Word: “...when ye received from us the word of the message, even the word of God, ye accepted it not as the word of men, but, as it is in truth, the word of God, which also worketh in you that believe” (I Thessalonians 2:13).