

INTRODUCTION.

- A. Scripture text: **Titus 3:3-7**.
- B. This sermon is from the BQBox (#13). The question reads, "What is the work of the Holy Spirit in our life today? Does He work in the life of a sinner to bring him to the Lord?"
- C. This is a very good question deserving of our consideration. There are actually two questions here-- one this evening and the other for next Sunday night.
- D. Tonight: How the HS works in the life of a sinner to bring him to the Lord.
- E. Next Sunday night: How the HS works in the life of a Xian.
- F. You may have noticed that an individual comes to services for a long time without being obedient but then all of a sudden something "hits them" and they are immediately baptized. Is this the influence of the HS?
- G. In 1Cor. 3:6, Paul says that God has a role in people becoming Xians. As we plant and water the word (the seed, Lk. 8:11), it is God that actually causes the growth. So, what role does God play in the conversion of lost souls?

I. SOME THOUGHTS ON THE HOLY SPIRIT.

- A. What did Jesus mean in Jn. 3:3-5 when He said everyone must be born of the "water and the Spirit"?
Jesus answered and said to him, "Truly, truly, I say to you, unless one is born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God." **4** Nicodemus said[^] to Him, "How can a man be born when he is old? He cannot enter a second time into his mother's womb and be born, can he?" **5** Jesus answered, "Truly, truly, I say to you, unless one is born of water and the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God."
 1. He was not speaking of water being the physical birth and the Spirit being the spiritual birth because Nicodemus knew that it would be impossible to re-enter the mother's womb. Nicodemus knew Jesus was speaking of a spiritual birth and involved both water and the Spirit.
 2. Traditionally we have interpreted this passage as a reference to baptism. In Ac. 2:38 both the water and the Spirit are mentioned.
 3. However, the Greek word for 'born' is *gennaō* which as the meaning of to procreate, to regenerate; that is to bring forth, or to be delivered of. This sheds a different light on the text in that by this definition we see that the Spirit had a hand in one being born again, and not a result of one being born again. The same word is used in Mt. 1:20.
- B. Does 1Cor. 12:13 teach an influence of the HS apart from the word?
For by one Spirit we were all baptized into one body, whether Jews or Greeks, whether slaves or free, and we were all made to drink of one Spirit.
 1. Raymond Kelcy thinks that the administrator of the baptism is the HS. Even if He wasn't it seems clear that the HS had some role in the baptisms of those in Corinth. So, what is that role?
 2. The example of the conversion in the book of Acts stress again and again that men and women were not influenced by the Spirit in a direct way, but by the preaching of the Spirit written word.
- C. Does Titus 3:5-6 teach an independent influence of the HS?
*He saved us, not on the basis of deeds which we have done in righteousness, but according to His mercy, by the washing of regeneration and renewing by the Holy Spirit, **6** whom He poured out upon us richly through Jesus Christ our Savior,*
It would seem to me that this verse is a restatement of Ac. 2:38. The phrase "renewing by the Holy Spirit" must be understood with the phrase that precedes it, "washing of regeneration."
- D. What did Paul mean in Gal. 3:2-3 when he said, "having begun by the Spirit"?
*This is the only thing I want to find out from you: did you receive the Spirit by the works of the Law, or by hearing with faith? **3** Are you so foolish? Having begun by the Spirit, are you now being perfected by the flesh?*
In contrast to the works of the Law, Xians have begun their new life in X when they received the HS. They received the HS in obedience (Ac. 5:32), by being baptized (Ac. 2:38).

(Ac 5:32) And we are witnesses of these things; and *so is* the Holy Spirit, whom God has given to those who obey Him.”

(Ac 2:38) Peter *said* to them, “Repent, and each of you be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of your sins; and you will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit.

II. WHAT JESUS SAID ABOUT THE HOLY SPIRIT.

- A. Jesus said that the HS would *testify* (Jn. 15:26-27).
“When the Helper comes, whom I will send to you from the Father, that is the Spirit of truth, who proceeds from the Father, He will bear witness of Me, 27 and you will bear witness also, because you have been with Me from the beginning.”
- B. Jesus declared that the HS would *convict* the world of sin (Jn. 16:8).
“And He, when He comes, will convict the world concerning sin, and righteousness, and judgment;
- C. Jesus said that the HS would *speak* (Jn. 16:13).
“But when He, the Spirit of truth, comes, He will guide you into all the truth; for He will not speak on His own initiative, but whatever He hears, He will speak; and He will disclose to you what is to come.”
- D. The conclusion is that the HS converts men through His revealed written word.

III. HOW THE SPIRIT WORKS THROUGH THE WORD.

- A. James 1:21.
Therefore putting aside all filthiness and all that remains of wickedness, in humility receive the word implanted, which is able to save your souls.
- B. Romans 10:17.
So faith comes from hearing, and hearing by the word of Christ.
- C. 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 those who are sanctified.”
- D. John 17:17.
“Sanctify them in the truth; Thy word is truth.”
- E. 1Peter 1:22.
Since you have in obedience to the truth purified your souls for a sincere love of the brethren, fervently love one another from the heart,
- F. 2Timothy 3:15.
and that from childhood you have known the sacred writings which are able to give you the wisdom that leads to salvation through faith which is in Christ Jesus.
- G. John 8:32; Rom. 6:17-18.
(Jn 8:32) “...and you shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free.”
(Rom 6:17-18) But thanks be to God that though you were slaves of sin, you became obedient from the heart to that form of teaching to which you were committed, **18** and having been freed from sin, you became slaves of righteousness.
- H. 1Corinthians 1:21-24.
For since in the wisdom of God the world through its wisdom did not come to know God, God was well-pleased through the foolishness of the message preached to save those who believe. 22 For indeed Jews ask for signs, and Greeks search for wisdom; **23** but we preach Christ crucified, to Jews a stumbling block, and to Gentiles foolishness, **24** but to those who are the called, both Jews and Greeks, Christ the power of God and the wisdom of God.

IV. SOME THINGS TO THINK ABOUT.

- A. If the HS operated in a direct way, apart from the written word, then why are there no Xians in some lands?
- B. If the HS operates directly on some and not on others, is God a respecter of persons (Rom. 2:11)?
For there is no partiality with God.
- C. If the HS operates directly on some, apart from the written word, is this not a possible violation of the free-will of man.
- D. If the HS operated in a direct way, apart from the written word, who is it that the gospel is the power to save (Rom. 1:16)? It would be the HS who has the power to save.

- E. It would seem from various passages that the promise of the HS is not to non-Xians, but to Xians (Gal. 4:6; Ac. 5:32; 2:38).
(Gal 4:6) Because you are sons, God has sent forth the Spirit of His Son into our hearts, crying, “Abba! Father!”
(Ac 5:32) And we are witnesses of these things; and *so is* the Holy Spirit, whom God has given to those who obey Him.”
(Ac 2:38) Peter *said* to them, “Repent, and each of you be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of your sins; and you will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit.

CONCLUSION AND INVITATION.

- A. There is a divine role in the conversion process. But, I believe it to be a safer position to say that the role of the HS in the conversion process is through the Word.
- B. However, the HS does have a role, apart from the word, in the life of a Xian. That lesson is next week (Lord willing).
- C. Non-Xians need to respond to the gospel to be saved (1Cor. 1:21-24).
For since in the wisdom of God the world through its wisdom did not come to know God, God was well-pleased through the foolishness of the message preached to save those who believe. **22** For indeed Jews ask for signs, and Greeks search for wisdom; **23** but we preach Christ crucified, to Jews a stumbling block, and to Gentiles foolishness, **24** but to those who are the called, both Jews and Greeks, Christ the power of God and the wisdom of God.
- D. Non-Xians need to be obedient to the word to be saved (Rom. 6:17-18).
But thanks be to God that though you were slaves of sin, you became obedient from the heart to that form of teaching to which you were committed, **18** and having been freed from sin, you became slaves of righteousness.
- E. Plan of salvation for non-Xians; erring Xians.