

Biblical Topics

Holy Spirit – His Work

The work of the Holy Spirit is to sanctify us. That means making us holy by bringing us to faith in Christ and imparting to me the blessings of redemption.

- 1 Corinthians 6:11: And that is what some of you were. But you were washed, you were sanctified, you were justified in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ and by the Spirit of our God.

It was necessary that the Holy Spirit work faith in us. According to the Scriptures we are by nature spiritually blind, dead and an enemy of God. We cannot by our own reason or strength believe in Jesus Christ, our Lord of come to Him. The power to touch and move the heart lies not in our reason but in the truths of the Gospel. It is this Gospel that the Holy Spirit operates on hearts and creates faith. Without faith we would remain spiritually blind and dead and go to eternal damnation. Without faith we would be God's worst enemy and be constantly at war with Him. It would be a war that we could not win.

- 1 Corinthians 2:14: The man without the Spirit does not accept the things that come from the Spirit of God, for they are foolishness to him, and he cannot understand them, because they are spiritually discerned.
- Ephesian 2:1: As for you, you were dead in your transgressions and sins,.
- Romans 8:7: the sinful mind is hostile to God. It does not submit to God's law, nor can it do so.
- Ephesian 2:8-9: For it is by grace you have been saved, through faith—and this not from yourselves, it is the gift of God—⁹ not by works, so that no one can boast.
- 1 Corinthians 12:3: Therefore I tell you that no one who is speaking by the Spirit of God says, "Jesus be cursed," and no one can say, "Jesus is Lord," except by the Holy Spirit.

The Gospel is the means whereby the Holy Spirit offers us the blessings of Christ and works in our hearts that faith by which we accept Christ and His salvation. He first uses the Law to lead us to know our sins and to feel sorry for them. The Law led us to a realization of our lost. The Gospel promise is free and unconditional. Through it the Holy Spirit brings such influence to bear on the penitent heart that it turns in confidence to Christ. That confidence is faith.

- Romans 10:17:
- 1 Peter 1:23:
- 2 Thessalonians 2:14:
- 2 Timothy 1:9:

This work of the Holy Spirit is called conversion, or regeneration (new birth). Conversion is turning. The Holy Spirit turned from sin towards our Savior. It is also called regeneration or a new birth because there is a new attitude toward God. We are a new creature.

- Titus 3:5:
- Jeremiah 31:18:
- John 3:5-6:

By working faith in us the Holy Spirit has also enlightened us with His gifts. To “enlighten” means to make a dark matter clear and to give the right understanding of what he has learned. The Holy Spirit works a true appreciation of all that has been done for us as new creatures.

- 1 Peter 2:9:
- 2 Corinthians 4:6:
- 1 Peter 1:8:
- Romans 15:13:

The Holy Spirit has sanctified me in the true faith. To sanctify means to make holy or to dedicate to the service of God. Faith will always bring forth the fruit of faith (good works). The believer will suppress the wicked promptings and will resist temptation. He will here and there fall into sin, but he will not let it rule over him. The change of heart will not only avoid sin, it will also look to do things that please God and his fellowman.

- 1 Thessalonians 4:3:
- 2 Corinthians 5:17:
- Psalm 51:10:
- Ephesians 2:10:

The Holy Spirit by the Gospel keeps us in the true faith. By means of food God preserves our physical life. By means of the Gospel the Holy Spirit preserves our new spiritual life. Through this faith God will finally save and bring us into heaven. The Holy Spirit calls, gathers, enlightens, and sanctifies the whole Christian Church on earth and keeps it with Jesus Christ in the one true faith.

- 1 Peter 1:5:
- Philippians 1:6:
- 1 Thessalonians 2:13:

The above information is taken from: “Luther’s Small Catechism” annotated by Edward W. A. Koehler.