

## The Holy Spirit Operates Through The Word

by John Isaac Edwards

Men have signed their names to affirm this proposition: “The Scriptures teach that in the conviction and conversion of alien sinners, the Holy Spirit operates directly upon them, separate and apart from the written or spoken word.” The Scriptures show that the Holy Spirit operates through the word of God in conviction and conversion of alien sinners.

### 1) **The Law Of The Lord Is Perfect, Converting The Soul.**

The Psalmist stated, “The law of the Lord is perfect, converting the soul...” (Ps. 19:7). If a direct operation of the Holy Spirit upon the alien sinner is necessary, then the Lord’s law must not be perfect, converting the soul! Yet, the word of God says it is. Conversion is not dependent upon one’s receiving a direct operation of the Holy Spirit upon him, but upon his receiving the Lord’s law! (Ps. 51:13; Mt. 13:15; Acts 28:27).

2) **Quickened By The Word.** The Psalmist uttered, “...thy word hath quickened me” (Ps. 119:50). Again he declared, “I will never forget thy precepts: for with them thou hast quickened me” (Ps. 119:93). To be quickened is to be restored to life. Paul said the

Ephesians had been quickened (Eph. 2:1, 5). How was this accomplished? Not by the Holy Spirit operating directly upon them, separate and apart from the word, but through “...the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation...” (Eph. 1:13).

3) **The Word Produces Faith.** In the Parable of the Sower, the devil “...taketh away the word out of their hearts, lest they should believe and be saved” (Lk. 8:11-12). Jesus prayed “...for them also which shall believe on me through their word” (Jn. 17:20). Acts 4:4 reports, “Howbeit many of them which heard the word believed.” Peter said, “...that the Gentiles by my mouth should hear the word of the gospel, and believe” (Acts 15:7). Paul asked, “...how shall they believe in him of whom they have not heard?” (Rom. 10:14). “So then faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the word of God” (Rom. 10:17).

4) **The Truth Makes Free.** Jesus taught, “And ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free” (Jn. 8:32). God’s word is truth (Jn. 17:17).

5) **Sanctified Through The Word.** Jesus prayed, “Sanctify them through thy truth: thy

word is truth” (Jn. 17:17). The Corinthians were sanctified (1 Cor. 1:2; 6:11). How were they sanctified, or set apart as holy? Acts 18:8, “...many of the Corinthians hearing believed, and were baptized.” That’s how!

6) **The Gospel Is The Power To Save.** Paul affirmed, “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” (Rom. 1:16). Which of these is correct: 1 Corinthians 15:1-2 reveals the Corinthians were saved by having received the direct operation of the Holy Spirit upon them OR by having received the preaching of the gospel? Read it!

7) **The Law Of The Spirit Makes Free.** Romans 8:2 says, “For the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus hath made me free from the law of sin and death.” Paul did not say he was made free by the Holy Spirit operating directly upon him, separate and apart from the word. Rather, he was made free by the law of the Spirit. This passage shows that the Spirit is not the law and the law is not the Spirit, and the Spirit makes free through His law!

8) **Preaching Saves.**  
“...it pleased God by the foolishness of preaching to save them that believe” (1 Cor. 1:21). Paul informed Titus that God “...manifested his word through preaching” (Titus 1:3), not by the Holy Spirit operating directly upon them, separate and apart from the revealed word.

9) **Reconciled By The Word.** Committed unto the apostles as ambassadors for Christ was “...the word of reconciliation” (2 Cor. 5:19). The Ephesians were reconciled unto God (Eph. 2:16). Know how this occurred? “And came and preached peace to you which were afar off...” (Eph. 2:17). Through preaching; not the Spirit operating directly upon them apart from the preaching of the word!

10) **Purified By The Truth.** Peter addressed scattered strangers, “Seeing ye have purified your souls in obeying the truth...” At the Jerusalem discussion, Peter said that God purified the hearts of the Gentiles by faith (Acts 15:9). Remember how faith comes? By hearing the word of God

(Rom. 10:17).

11) **Born Again By The Word.** Again Peter declared, “Being born again, not of corruptible seed, but of incorruptible, by the word of God, which liveth and abideth for ever” (1 Pet. 1:23). The word of God, in this passage, is “...the word which by the gospel is preached unto you” (1 Pet. 1:25). We are “...begotten through the gospel” (1 Cor. 4:15), “...with the word of truth...” (Jas. 1:18).

12) **The Word Is Able To Save.** Read James 1:21. Did James say, “...receive with meekness the direct operation of the Holy Spirit upon you, which is able to save your souls” OR “...receive with meekness the engrafted word, which is able to save your souls”?

13) **The Sword Of The Spirit Is The Word Of God.** Among the whole armour of God, Paul mentioned, “...the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God” (Eph. 6:17). Hebrews 4:12 describes the word of God as “...quick, and powerful, and sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing even

to the dividing asunder of soul and spirit...” This shows the word of God is the agency or instrument through which the Spirit operates upon the soul and spirit of man. “Powerful” indicates God’s word is “full of power.” When we point out that the Spirit of God operates through the word of God, we are accused of not believing in the Holy Spirit or limiting the Spirit. Not so! To say one must have the Holy Spirit operate directly upon him is to deny the word of God is full of power!

Whatever is ascribed to the office work of the Holy Spirit, in the gospel plan of salvation, is also ascribed to the word of God. If the Holy Spirit operates directly upon alien sinners, separate and apart from the written or spoken word:

Why send Ananias (Acts 9:11)?

Why send for Peter (Acts 10:5; 11:13-14)?

Why are there no Christians where preachers have not gone and Bibles have not been sent?

Such makes God a respecter of persons and the Spirit responsible for cases of non-conversion, which He is not! (Acts 10:34; 13:46).

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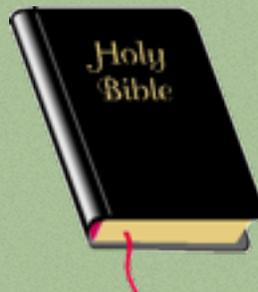
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