

The Prattmont Church of Christ is just what the name suggests, a church that belongs to Christ. We are not a denomination; we are simply a group of Christians trying very hard to practice the teachings of our Head, Jesus Christ. The New Testament offers a complete pattern for what each local church should be like—its organization, its worship, its work, etc. We are committed to following that pattern. We cordially invite you to attend our services. We would also welcome any comments or questions about this bulletin.

TIMES OF SERVICES:

Sunday

Bible Study 9:00 A.M.
 Worship 10:00 A.M.
 Training Class 5:00 P.M.
 Worship 6:00 P.M.

Wednesday:

Bible Study 7:00 P.M.



Weekly Bulletin
 August 7, 2016

The Holy Spirit's Role in Conversion

by Bryan Gibson

Jesus made a promise to His **apostles**, that He would baptize **them** with the Holy Spirit (Luke 24:49; Acts 1:5, 8). Jesus made another promise regarding the Holy Spirit, this one with a more **general** application: “And when He has come, He will convict the **world** of sin, and of righteousness, and of judgment” (John 16:8). Read the surrounding verses and you can see that Jesus is clearly talking about the Holy Spirit. Remember this promise, because we will come back to it shortly.

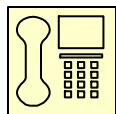
The best way to understand the Holy Spirit's role in conversion is to look at the actual cases of conversion recorded in the Book of Acts. What role did the Holy Spirit play in these conversions? He did just what Jesus said He would do—He convicted these people of sin, of righteousness, and of judgment. How did He accomplish that? He did it through the preaching of the

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gospel, which shouldn't surprise us in the least, because the gospel is "the power of God to salvation" (Romans 1:16). Yes, the gospel was preached by men, but they preached it "by the Holy Spirit" (1 Peter 1:12), because the words they spoke were revealed by the Holy Spirit (John 16:13; 1 Corinthians 2:6-13; Ephesians 3:1-5). Jesus had this to say about the life-giving power of these words: "It is the Spirit who gives life; the flesh profits nothing. The words that I speak to you are spirit, and they are life" (John 6:63).

To illustrate, consider the conversion of some Jews in Acts 2. Notice verse 37 in particular: "Now **when they heard this**, they were **cut to the heart**, and said to Peter and the rest of the apostles, "Men and brethren, what shall we do?" This is exactly what Jesus was talking about—these people were convicted by the Holy Spirit, because the gospel Peter preached to them was revealed by the Holy Spirit (Acts 2:4). Study the conversions one by one, and you will see this same truth illustrated over and over again. Pay close attention to how they responded **when they heard the gospel**, and realize that this is the work of the Holy Spirit in conversion.

Of course, the Holy Spirit does not convict everyone—the Book of Acts also contains cases of non-conversion. Some were not converted, because they did not receive the word "with meekness" (James 1:21). The problem was not with the Holy Spirit, or with the words He revealed; the problem was with the hearers. As Stephen said to his audience, "You always resist the Holy Spirit" (Acts 7:51). The gospel is compared to a fra-

grance in 2 Corinthians 2—to some it is the "aroma of death," to others it is the "aroma of life" (2 Corinthians 2:14-16).

We urge all of our readers to give close attention to the gospel of Jesus Christ. Welcome it "not as the word of men, but as it is in truth, the word of God" (1 Thessalonians 2:13). It will tell you "words by which you and all your household will be saved" (Acts 11:14). Give the gospel a fair hearing, and the Holy Spirit will convict you of your sin; He will show you how to be right with God; and He will impress upon you the urgency of it all by warning you of the judgment to come.

Love and Fear

Yes, the faithful Christian **loves the Lord**, but He also **fears the Lord**, because he knows Him well. He knows He is perfectly holy, and therefore despises sin (Revelation 15:4; Habakkuk 1:13). He knows Him as the Almighty (Revelation 4:8), as the One who created all things by the "breath of His mouth" (Psalms 33:6). He understands both the goodness and severity of the Lord (Romans 11:22). He is still motivated by love, but his service is also marked by reverence, by trembling and godly fear (Hebrews 12:28; Philippians 2:12-13; 1 Peter 1:17). Because He is in awe of God (Psalms 33:8-9), he is also in awe of God's word (Psalms 119:61), and so he treats every commandment with the greatest respect (Matthew 5:19; 28:19-20; Acts 3:22). Every warning—every "take heed" or "beware"—issued by the Lord is taken very seriously (Hebrews 11:7), because he knows that the Lord does not make idle threats.