The Work of the Holy Spirit Today

1. His Work of Conversion
   1. As we begin this lesson on the Holy Spirit’s work today, let’s start at the very beginning: His work (role) in guiding us to salvation.
   2. He exposes our sin and convicts us (John 16:7-11). This is what makes us aware of our sinfulness and need for salvation.
      1. How? We are convicted of our sins by the word of God (Jn. 16:12-13).
      2. God uses men to relay His word to the lost (Acts 8:26-29; Rom. 10:14-17).
   3. Once we are convicted of our sins and led to faith and obedience, the Holy Spirit plays an integral role in our conversion (John 3:3-5; Ephesians 2:17-18; Titus 3:5).
   4. Specifically, the Spirit delivers us into God’s fellowship (1 Cor. 12:12-13).
      1. Compare this text to Acts 2:38, 47.
      2. When a person is baptized in water, the Holy Spirit is acting. Again, we see this so clearly in John 3:3-5.
2. His Work of Preservation
   1. Once we are saved, the Holy Spirit plays a key role in preserving us.
      1. The Spirit is given to us as a “guarantee” (2 Cor. 1:21-22; Eph. 1:13-14).
         1. The word “sealed” is from the Greek word *sphragizo* and means, “to stamp (with a signet or private mark) for security or preservation.”
         2. The word “guarantee” refers to a down payment.
         3. Through the Spirit, God labels us as His own, invests in us and commits to our long-term improvement. Relate to Jude 24.
      2. We have reassurance of our relationship with God through the ongoing confirmation of the Holy Spirit (Romans 8:14-15; Galatians 4:6).
         1. The warm feeling, the comfort and the security we have within the confines of our homes and families are also provided to us on a spiritual level through the Holy Spirit.
         2. These are [intangible] impulses that we have as God’s children. The more we grow in our faith, the more frequent and effective these impulses will be.
   2. So far, the points we have considered regarding the Holy Spirit’s work in preservation are very general. Now let’s consider some specific ways that the Holy Spirit preserves us and keeps us going on a daily basis:
      1. We pray in the Spirit (Eph. 6:18; Jude 20).
         1. Adam Clarke says, “Holding fast the Divine influence received, and under that influence making prayer and supplication to God. The prayer that is not sent up through the influence of the Holy Ghost is never likely to reach heaven.”
         2. Though there are different interpretations, Romans 8:26-27 is often seen as a further description of the Spirit’s role in our prayer lives.
            1. Language denotes the Holy Spirit.
            2. Based on vs. 23, many view the ‘spirit’ as our own spirit.
      2. The Holy Spirit also guides us through the word.
         1. The Holy Spirit revealed the Word to the apostles and prophets of the first century, so when we are studying the Word, we are being led by the Holy Spirit. Relate to Ephesians 6:17.
         2. The Holy Spirit not only speaks to us through the written Word. He helps us to understand the Scriptures (1 Corinthians 2:6-16).
            1. The Spirit revealed God’s word to the apostles (vs. 10-11).
            2. While the people of the world cannot fully grasp God’s word, we who have the Spirit can understand it (vs. 12-16).
            3. Relate to Ephesians 1:15-18 and James 1:5.
      3. He molds our character through our continued devotion to the Word He revealed and inspired (Galatians 5:22-23).
      4. He helps us to overcome the flesh (Rom. 8:5; Gal. 5:16-17). *There is no reason to view this as ‘mystical’ work. We overcome the flesh by submitting ourselves to the Word.*
      5. He distributes gifts to Christians (1 Cor. 12:11; Rom. 12:3-8). *There are many non-miraculous gifts and talents that we have as unique people in the church today.*
3. His Work of Guiding Decisions
   1. We all agree that God works providentially in our lives. He leads and guides those who allow Him to do so. The Holy Spirit is the agent by which God guides us.
   2. He creates opportunities for us. He opens and closes doors (Acts 16:6-10).
      1. The Spirit had a more active role in the first century in that He spoke orally to these saints and led them miraculously.
      2. But I think we can apply the principle of this passage to modern times.
   3. Within the church, there is reason to believe that while *we* appoint elders based on the qualifications given, the Holy Spirit guides the process (Acts 20:28).
4. How Does the Holy Spirit Indwell Us?
   1. The Bible teaches that the Spirit dwells in us (1 Cor. 3:16; 6:19-20).
   2. There are two views here:
      1. The Holy Spirit literally dwells within us bodily.
      2. This language is indicative, not of a literal indwelling, but of a relationship we have with the Spirit. He dwells representatively through the Word.
   3. It is my view that the Spirit dwells within us in the sense that we have a relationship with Him through our faith and obedience to the Word:
      1. The Father, Son and Word all dwell within us (Rom. 8:9-11; Col. 3:16). *We cannot argue that the Spirit literally indwells us while these do not*.
      2. But more to the point, consider 1 Kings 8.
         1. In one sense, God indwelt the Temple (1 Kin. 8:10-13; 2 Sam. 6:2).
         2. But really, He couldn’t dwell there (1 Kings 8:27; Acts 17:24).
         3. He actually dwells in heaven (1 Kings 8:30, 32, 36, 39, 43, 45, 49).
         4. It’s clear that God indwelt the Temple in a symbolic of representative sense. It represented His presence in Israel and relationship with the people. The Spirit indwells us the same way today.