

Why The Spirit?

“For all who are led by the Spirit of God are sons of God” (Rom 8:14).

What is the purpose of God sending the Holy Spirit to live within believers? Firstly, the Spirit gives us gifts, leads us, and empowers us for service but a vital activity of the Spirit, that is often overlooked, is the work He does within us to empower us to overcome sin. Sin is THE issue between man and God. The Bible was written solely because of sin and Jesus died on the cross solely because of sin. So, if man had never sinned then the Bible would never have been written and, of course, Jesus' death would not have been necessary either. However, man did sin and as a result Jesus suffered a terrible death for us.

Sin always separates us from God and for this reason He says, *“Be holy, because I am holy”* (1 Pet. 1:16). We all know that sinning is unholy so if we are to obey God's command to be holy then our sinful nature, the flesh, must be overcome. God knows that we can't do this in our own strength so He sends the Holy Spirit to empower us. Just as God sent Jesus to die to make it possible for us to be forgiven, He sends the Holy Spirit to live within us to strengthen us to resist sin and live a holy life because *“without holiness no one will see the Lord”* (Heb. 12:14).

This empowering work of the Spirit is spoken of in 2 Pet. 1:3-4 which say, *“His divine power [the Holy Spirit] has given us everything we need for life and godliness ... [so that] ... you may participate in the divine nature and escape the corruption in the world caused by evil desires”*. Rom. 8:4 adds to this saying that through the Spirit we are able to fulfill God's righteous requirements. So, with the power of the Holy Spirit, we can overcome the corruption of our evil desires and live a holy, righteous life.

Overcoming sin is a battle each of us must face personally. Gal. 5:17 tells us that within every believer there is a war going on between the Spirit and our sinful nature and, to win this war, Gal. 5:16 tells us, *“live by the Spirit, and you will not gratify the desires of the sinful nature”*. Many other passages also speak of being delivered from sin, such as:

- Rom. 6:14 which says, *“sin shall not be your master”*.
- Tit. 2:14 says that Jesus *“gave himself for us to redeem us [that is, to free us] from all wickedness and to purify for himself a people that are his very own”*.
- In John 8:34-36 Jesus said, *“everyone who sins is a slave to sin ... [but] ... if the Son sets you free, you will be free indeed”*.

From these verses we can see that God's purpose in the Holy Spirit is to free us from slavery to sin but this does not mean we become sinless. 1 John 2:1 tells us that we may sin from time to time. However, sin is not to be part of our normal lifestyle. There is a huge difference between an occasional sin and ongoing, deliberate sin that is a regular part of our way of life. Deliberate sin can lead to condemnation as Heb. 10:26-27 tell us.

To be freed from slavery to sin we simply need to confess our sins whenever convicted by the Holy Spirit. 1 John 1:9 says that if we confess we will be forgiven and ***cleansed of all unrighteousness***. This is an easy process in theory but it can be very hard in practice because our sinful nature wars fiercely against the Spirit's conviction (Gal. 5:17). However, as we continue to humbly confess and turn away from sin the Spirit strengthens us to resist. It may take time but, as we resist, the Spirit will renew us within and we will be cleansed of all unrighteousness - sin will no longer be our master.

Finally, Php. 2:13 tells us, *“it is God [the Holy Spirit] who works in you to will and to act according to his good purpose”* and Rom. 8:14 says, *“those who are led by the Spirit of God are sons of God”*. Those who do not follow the leading of the Spirit are not sons of God.

This article can be downloaded as a PDF or an MP3 from -
<http://www.christianissues.biz/downloads.html>

The video of “Why The Spirit?” can be seen on YouTube at-
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=UZp5TTRvqf4>

Christian Issues' blog can be subscribed to at -
<http://www.christianissues.biz/blog/wordpress/feed/>

Mick Alexander
leeandmick@gmail.com
<http://www.ChristianIssues.biz>