



Holy Spirit – How He changes us?

One of the main works that the Holy Spirit does in a believer is in the area of making Christ's followers more and more like Jesus. The whole desire of the Holy Spirit is to bring Glory to Jesus and everything He is about, is to point people powerfully and focus people on the life and activity of the Son. One of the ways that He does this is by reproducing the character of Christ in the life of the individual believer. As we grow in this work we begin to bear greater fruit in our everyday life for Jesus and therefore glorify Him.

Discuss - (In group / or small groups)

- Q1) Have you seen any real changes in your lifestyle, attitudes, behaviour since you became a Christian?
- Q2) How do you think the Holy Spirit can help you to change for the better ?
- Q3) What do you think your role is in helping the Holy Spirit to change you?

Fact 1 - The Holy Spirit sensitises our consciences!

One of the important ways that the Spirit develops us to be more like Christ is through the process of conviction of sin and revelation of right and wrong through God's eyes. The Holy Spirit acts like a guide in that when we are about to go down a wrong path or do something that will grieve God, He convicts us of this wrong by making us feel uncomfortable in ourselves. Over time the Spirit takes us deeper into the area of conviction so that even what we see as a little sin can be fully dealt with through repentance and the blood of Jesus. James 3 v 13 – 18

Fact 2 - The Spirit of God leads us on in greater victory over sin and self through Jesus.

One of the wonderful works of the Holy Spirit is that in every sense He helps a believer apply and live in the freedom and victory of Christ for His life. The Spirit's work is to deepen an understanding and experience of the authority and power that Jesus has established in the life of a believer through His name. Over the years the Spirit brings deeper and deeper revelations of Christ's full salvation so that we expect and believe that full freedom and victory over the flesh, the world and Satan (the accuser of God's people.) can be ours. This is more than just a teaching of concepts, it is an **experienced wisdom** that changes us from one degree of glory to the next. Romans 8 v 1 – 14

Fact 3 – The Spirit fine tunes our lives so that the blueprint of Christ-like attitudes is developed.

This is a big part of the Holy Spirit's activity, it is to conform us to the image of Jesus. Not that we ever lose our unique identity of what makes us –us, but that our negative character flaws and behaviour traits, our prejudiced attitudes or selfish intentions are brought to the surface so that the Lord can refine, discipline and change us to be the best people we can be. This process of refinement is a life long reality and is only fully completed in the life that is to come. However we must never just accept sin as part of us or allow excuses to be made about our character flaws, "Oh. That's just them." For in Christ, over time, these things ARE dealt with. John 16 v 5 – 16

Fact 4 – The Spirit sows and cultivates the fruit of the Spirit in our lives.

The work of the Spirit is not just a negative work of conviction, but is also a positive work of sowing and cultivating seeds of Godly character into our lives. The reason why Scripture calls the character traits of a Christian – fruit of the Spirit – is that the Holy Spirit is the one that sows them and cultivates them within the life of a believer. This work is not done through a person's best efforts alone but is done through the Spirit changing, educating and empowering our "inner self" to live for Jesus. In every sense the Spirit takes from what is Jesus' and makes known, gives it to us. This results in the growth and development of Jesus- like attitudes in our lives. In fact "Puritans" believed that if someone was truly "*Born Again*" then there would be continued evidence of this by the change and growth of the fruit of the Holy Spirit in their lives. A continued growth in the fruit of the Spirit is a sign that someone is becoming a mature and anointed Christian, in the Lord. Galatians 5 v 16 – 25

Fact 5 – We need to co-operate with what the Spirit is doing for this work to be effective.

Although we have talked a lot about the activity of the Holy Spirit in the "sanctification" (growth in holiness) of a Christian. It has to be said that Scripture declares that this activity of the Holy Spirit goes hand in hand with our desire to co-operate and be obedient to the work of the Spirit in our lives. Yes, this is a work of the Spirit – BUT "it is not a case of let go and let God." As a Christian we have been set free so that we can live in that full freedom. That means cultivating a Godly life each day by the choices we make. Avoiding evil and sin and choosing actively to obey The Spirit and the Words of Christ so that His will is done in us and through us. Deep change and growth in the fruit -WILL NOT take place unless **we learn to** and **daily put off** the old life of sin and put on the new life of Christ. Colossians 3 v 1 –17

