

The Role of the Holy Spirit

The initial indwelling of the Holy Spirit is a one time act of God. Throughout a believer's life, the Holy Spirit continues to work in our hearts to grow and sanctify us. Ephesians 5:18 tells us to "be filled with the Holy Spirit."

Look at page 74 of our text, item 1 under Notes to help us understand this admonition. What do you think about this, how do we do this?

Luke 11:11 – 13 says this: "11 *Which of you fathers, if your son asks for a fish, will give him a snake instead? 12 Or if he asks for an egg, will give him a scorpion? 13 If you then, though you are evil, know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more will your Father in heaven give the Holy Spirit to those who ask him!*"

In the ongoing work of our sanctification, the Spirit is at work in several ways:

- Assures us of our privilege as children of God. Look at page 71, second paragraph, and

Romans 8:9 – 11 and 14 – 16: "9 You, however, are controlled not by the sinful nature but by the Spirit, if the Spirit of God lives in you. And if anyone does not have the Spirit of Christ, he does not belong to Christ. 10 But if Christ is in you, your body is dead because of sin, yet your spirit is alive because of righteousness. 11 And if the Spirit of him who raised Jesus from the dead is living in you, he who raised Christ from the dead will also give life to your mortal bodies through his Spirit, who lives in you. ...if by the Spirit you put to death the misdeeds of the body, you will live, 14 because those who are led by the Spirit of God are sons of God. 15 For you did not receive a spirit that makes you a slave again to fear, but you received the Spirit of sonship. And by him we cry, "Abba, Father." 16 The Spirit himself testifies with our spirit that we are God's children.

How does this help us to pray?

Bryan Chapell in *Praying Backwards* says this "By answering our prayers, the Father indicates His willingness to display His glory through us. The Holy Spirit confirms (this) aspect of our privileged position by making our prayers effective."

God actually uses our prayers in real ways to display His glory and accomplish His will.

- The Holy Spirit helps us to know Christ and illuminates Scripture for us. Page 72 in our text from "God's plan of salvation through the quote from John 16.

How have you seen this to be true in your own life?

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- The Holy Spirit convicts us of sin and assures us of forgiveness. Look at Ephesians 4:30 – 32 *“30 And do not grieve the Holy Spirit of God, with whom you were sealed for the day of redemption. 31 Get rid of all bitterness, rage and anger, brawling and slander, along with every form of malice. 32 Be kind and compassionate to one another, forgiving each other, just as in Christ God forgave you.”*

How do you feel when reading verses 30 and 31? What about verse 32? The work of the Holy Spirit in your heart to convict and assure of forgiveness is the best evidence of a changed nature.

- The Holy Spirit shapes our perception of our “needs.”

How does this happen as we study and pray directly from Scripture? How does this look in our own lives and thoughts?

- He intercedes directly for us.

Romans 8:26 In the same way, the Spirit helps us in our weakness. We do not know what we ought to pray for, but the Spirit himself intercedes for us with groans that words cannot express. 27 And he who searches our hearts knows the mind of the Spirit, because the Spirit intercedes for the saints in accordance with God's will. 28 And we know that in all things God works for the good of those who love him, who have been called according to his purpose.

Paul, in Verse 22 refers to the groaning of creation waiting for the fulfillment of God's purpose as being like the groans of a mother in labor, then he proceeds to verse 26 speaking of the Spirit's groaning on our behalf.

This speaks of the strength, intensity and purpose of the Holy Spirit in His intervention as He prays directly for us. The Spirit fully understands God's purposes and will for us, our knowledge is limited.

Isaiah 55:8 – 11 tells us - 8 *“For my thoughts are not your thoughts, neither are your ways my ways,” declares the LORD. 9 “As the heavens are higher than the earth, so are my ways higher than your ways and my thoughts than your thoughts. 10 As the rain and the snow come down from heaven, and do not return to it without watering the earth and making it bud and flourish, so that it yields seed for the sower and bread for the eater, 11 so is my word that goes out from my mouth: It will not return to me empty, but will accomplish what I desire and achieve the purpose for which I sent it.*

How does this speak to you about how the Holy Spirit prays for us?

God will never answer prayers in a way that feeds sin – our eternal good is His goal for us.

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Closing prayers from –
Romans 8:9 – 11 and 14 – 16 (page 1)

John 16:13 – 15 (text, page 72)

Ephesians 4:30 – 32 (page 2)

Romans 8:26 – 28 (page 2)