

THE SWORD OF THE SPIRIT: GOD'S WORD (2)

By Keith Greer

Both Are Involved in Spiritual Birth. The Spirit: "Jesus answered, 'Most assuredly, I say to you, unless one is born of water and the Spirit, he cannot enter the kingdom of God.'" {John 3:5} Jesus told Nicodemus that, to enter His kingdom, a person must be born of **"water and the spirit."** Nicodemus thought the Lord was speaking of a second physical birth. But He wasn't. Jesus was speaking about a different birth type – spiritual birth. The Word: "Having been born again, not of corruptible seed but incorruptible, through the word of God which lives and abides forever." {1 Peter 1:23} The seed that is planted in honest hearts is God's word {Luke 8:11}. When that seed is planted, accepted, and obeyed, the result is a new creation {2 Corinthians 5:17}, a spiritual birth into Christ.

Both Save. The Spirit: "Not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to His mercy He saved us, through the washing of regeneration and renewing of the Holy Spirit." {Titus 3:5} The Holy Spirit's regenerating work saves the sinner. The Word: "Therefore lay aside all filthiness and overflow of wickedness, and receive with meekness the implanted word, which is able to save your souls." {James 1:21} The Holy Spirit works through the word to bring about man's salvation. Consider the examples of first-century conversions found in the book of Acts. What was the first thing that was done for those who were converted? They were taught the gospel, and when they believed and obeyed, they were saved. Again, we see the Holy Spirit working through the Divine word.

Both Sanctify. The Spirit: "And such were some of you. But you were washed, but you were sanctified, but you were justified in the name of the Lord Jesus and by the Spirit of our God." {1 Corinthians 6:11} Paul told the Corinthians that the Holy Spirit's work brought change to their lives. Mystical? The Word: "Sanctify them by Your truth. Your word is truth." {John 17:17} Sanctification sets one apart. When a person obeys the teaching in God's Word – the work of the Holy Spirit – he lives a different type of life, a life separate from the world and its standards.

Both Indwell. The Spirit: "But if the Spirit of Him who raised Jesus from the dead dwells in you, He who raised Christ from the dead will also give life to your mortal bodies through His Spirit Who dwells in you." {Romans 8:11} The indwelling of the Holy Spirit is one of the most controversial subjects of our time – even in the Lord's church. The Bible clearly states that the Spirit dwells in the Christian; a bigger question is how? The Word: "Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly in all wisdom, teaching and admonishing one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing with grace in your hearts to the Lord." {Colossians 3:16} When one puts God's word into his heart, the Spirit is dwelling in him. "Your word I have hidden in my heart, that I might not sin against You." {Psalm 119:111}

Many other points could be made, but I think you understand the gist of the matter. The honest heart cannot overlook the connection between the Holy Spirit's work and God's word. The Holy Spirit's work involved the revelation of God's word {1 Corinthians 2:9-13}. Through that revealed word, God accomplishes His important work. Modern religion tries to persuade the world that the Spirit's

revealing work is ongoing. Not according to Jude 3, which says, “Contend earnestly for the faith which was once for all delivered to the saints! One thing you can count on for sure, whatever the Holy Spirit “reveals” today – is not found in God’s word and will always contradict plain teaching in the scriptures! Why? The Spirit’s work is completed! ***