

THE SWORD OF THE SPIRIT: THE WORD OF GOD (1)

BY KEITH GREER

“And take the helmet of salvation, and the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God.” {Ephesians 6:17} On any given Sunday, you can turn on your television and witness modern religion’s sensationalism and showmanship as it centers around the Holy Spirit’s miraculous works. Rabble-rousing, on fire, evangelists create excitement by laying hands on the poor, sick, disenchanted, and naïve; all the while claiming to heal their ills through the power of the Holy Spirit. Sadly, these people completely discount the power of God’s word. Many charge us with minimizing the role the Holy Spirit plays in man’s salvation. Nothing could be further from the truth. To prove what we believe, let’s consider the Bible’s teaching that the **Holy Spirit and God’s Word** are not competitors; rather, the Holy Spirit works **THROUGH** the Word...

Both Witness. The Spirit: *“The Spirit Himself bears witness with our spirit that we are children of God.” {Romans 8:16}* When God’s child walks according to the teaching in God’s word, his life is bearing witness with the Holy Spirit. The Word: *“You search the Scriptures, for in them you think you have eternal life; and these are they which testify of Me.” {John 5:39}* Jesus challenged His distracters to go to the word. Why? If they understood the truth taught therein, they would know that He was the true Son of God. Through the word, the Holy Spirit gave witness to this fact. God’s word gives overwhelming evidence to the claims of Jesus and backs up and validates ALL of them! God did not want man to take a “leap in the dark” concerning his personal faith. By the Holy Spirit He provided the means that we can have confidence in the promises we have in Christ.

Both Instruct. The Spirit: *“Yet for many years You had patience with them, and testified against them by Your Spirit in Your prophets. Yet they would not listen; therefore You gave them into the hand of the peoples of the lands.” {Nehemiah 9:30}* Nehemiah explained that in ancient times, God spoke His word through the work of the prophets. The Word: *“All Scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness.” {2 Timothy 3:16}* Remember, God’s word gives us Divine instruction concerning our duties toward God in this life. Without such instruction, how could we know whether God approves of our actions? Consider how would we know ...to get into Christ? Worship Him correctly? Organize the church? What the work of the church is? All these “instructions” were furnished by the Spirit—through the word!

Both Convict. The Spirit. *“Nevertheless I tell you the truth. It is to your advantage that I go away; for if I do not go away, the Helper will not come to you; but*

if I depart, I will send Him to you. And when He has come, He will convict the world of sin, and of righteousness, and of judgment.” {John 16:7,8} Our Lord promised to send the Holy Spirit to the apostles to enable them to convict men of their sins. In this sinful world, He would accomplish this feat through His word. The Word: *“Holding fast the faithful word as he has been taught, that he may be able, by sound doctrine, both to exhort and convict those who contradict.” {Titus 1:9}* God’s word, pointed at the heart of the sinner, will convict honest hearts of their need to repent and obey His will. God’s word is a mirror, *James 1:22-25*, and shows him the true spiritual reflection by looking into God’s word. Therefore, the Spirit accomplishes His work through the word.

Both Beget. The Spirit: *“Who also made us sufficient as ministers of the new covenant, not of the letter but of the Spirit; for the letter kills, but the Spirit gives life.” {2 Corinthians 3:6}* The Holy Spirit enables the dead to be brought to life. How does the Spirit show the sinner their true condition before their CREATOR? The Word: *“Of His own will He brought us forth by the word of truth, that we might be a kind of firstfruits of His creatures.” {James 1:18}* The Spirit does all His work through the word. The Spirit and the word work in unison to accomplish God’s will for sinful mankind. Exactly why Peter tells us we are born by the *“incorruptible seed,” 1 Peter 1:23.* ***