

Born of the Spirit

John 16:7-11 and John 3:1-15

Introduction

A. Salvation is **God's work**, and **He alone saves**

1. In Psalm 3:8 David wrote, "Salvation belongs to the LORD."
2. In Isaiah 43:11 God declared, "I, even I, am the LORD, and besides Me there is no savior."
3. God alone saves His people from Satan, sin, and Hell, and delivers them to Himself, holiness, and Heaven
4. The God that saves is triune: Father, Son, and Holy Spirit
 - a. The **Father** chose us, and drew us to Christ
 - b. The **Son** died in our place on the cross as God's sacrifice for sin and the ransom for our redemption
 - c. The **Holy Spirit** shows us our need for Christ, and regenerates us, making us the children of God

B. In this lesson, we will focus-in on the **Holy Spirit's work** in salvation

He shows us our need for Christ

A. Jesus told His disciples:

John 16:7-11

⁷...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.

⁸And when He has come, He will convict the world of sin, and of righteousness, and of judgment: ⁹of sin, because they do not believe in Me; ¹⁰of righteousness, because I go to My Father and you see Me no more; ¹¹of judgment, because the ruler of this world is judged.

B. Here, we learn that the Holy Spirit convicts the world of sin, righteousness, and judgment

1. First, the world is **guilty of sin**

a. The “world” refers to **all humanity**

b. The Bible tells us that all people are sinners and guilty of sin before God

Ecclesiastes 7:20

²⁰There is not a just man on earth who does good and does not sin.

Romans 2:23

²³...all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God

c. **Sin** is **rebellion** against God and **violation** of God’s Law, and the consequence for these is eternal punishment in Hell

d. This is the sad spiritual state of all Non-Christians in the world

2. Second, the Holy Spirit **convicts** the world of sin, righteousness, and judgment

a. He does this because the **first step** towards being saved from sin and Hell is realizing we are sinners in need of God's salvation

b. The word “**convict**” is a legal term that means to pronounce a judicial verdict by which the guilt of the offender at the bar of justice is defined and fixed

c. The Holy Spirit does not merely accuse people of sin, He brings to them an inescapable sense of guilt so that they realize their shame and helplessness before God

d. There are **three** specific things the Holy Spirit convicts the world of:

i. **Sin**⁹of sin, because they do not believe in Me

aa. Here, Jesus tells us that the Holy Spirit convicts sinners of one specific sin: **The sin of rejecting Jesus Christ as the Savior of the world**

bb. This is the crowning sin—all other sins are secondary issues compared to this one

cc. People do not go to Heaven and go to Hell because of this one specific sin—he or she rejects Jesus Christ as the Savior of the world

dd. The Holy Spirit shows sinners his and her need for Christ—the **only object of saving faith**

ii. Righteousness—¹⁰of righteousness, because I go to My Father and you see Me no more

aa. “Righteousness” is “right-standing-ness” before God

bb. The standard of righteousness is God, and He demands “perfection”—

Matthew 5:48

⁴⁸...you shall be perfect, just as your Father in heaven is perfect.

cc. Jesus was the only man who was truly righteous—
“Jesus Christ, the Righteous” (1 John 2:1)

cc-I. During His ministry on earth, Jesus was the visible and tangible standard of righteousness—the righteousness God requires of all men and women

cc-II. By seeing, hearing, and interacting with Jesus, people were convinced of their sinfulness and inability to become righteous before God on their own

cc-III. Here in John 16:7-11, the only righteous person was about to leave the world, but the Holy Spirit was to come and convince the world of the righteousness of the Lord Jesus Christ and the unrighteousness of all others

cc-IV. The Holy Spirit tells us: “If you want God to accept you into Heaven, you must be as righteous as Jesus.”

dd. The Holy Spirit shows sinners his and her need for Christ—the only source for obtaining God’s righteousness

iii. Judgment—¹¹of judgment, because the ruler of this world is judged.

aa. The “ruler of this world” refers to Satan

He controls the “invisible, spiritual world-system” that is opposed to God

bb. Christ defeated Satan, and passed judgment on him at His death on the cross

bb-I. Calvary was the decisive battlefield

bb-II. Satan was judged and condemned

bb-III. Satan is now awaiting his sentence: Eternal punishment in the Lake of Fire

cc. The Holy Spirit convinces Non-Christians that Satan is doomed and all his subjects with Him

dd. The Holy Spirit shows sinners his and her need for Christ—the only escape from God’s wrath

3. Application:

1. In **evangelism**, it is important to remember that it is the Holy Spirit's job to convict and convince Non-Christians of "sin, righteousness, and judgment"

2. Our job is to proclaim the Gospel of Christ to others in an engaging and clear way—

a. The Gospel tells us that all humanity—this includes you and me—is guilty of sin and condemned before God

b. The Gospel announces that God sent His one and only Son Jesus to earth to rescue His people from sin and Hell through His sinless life, sacrificial death, and literal resurrection from the dead

c. The Gospel calls sinners to turn from sin, and to believe in Jesus Christ as his or her one and only Savior

3. When we preach the Gospel of Christ in the power of the God, the Holy Spirit performs the internal work of convicting people of their sins, and convincing them of their need for Christ

The people's response to Peter's sermon on the Day of Pentecost (recorded in Acts 2) is a good example of this:

Acts 2:37-41

³⁷Now when they heard this, they were cut to the heart, and said to Peter and the rest of the apostles, "Men and brethren, what shall we do?"

³⁸Then Peter said to them, “Repent, and let every one of you be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins; and you shall receive the gift of the Holy Spirit. ³⁹For the promise is to you and to your children, and to all who are afar off, as many as the Lord our God will call.”

⁴⁰And with many other words he testified and exhorted them, saying, “Be saved from this perverse generation.”

⁴¹Then those who gladly received his word were baptized; and that day about three thousand souls were added to them.

4. Are you feeling the conviction of the Holy Spirit this morning? If so, come to Christ, and start trusting in Him as your one and only Savior.

He regenerates us, making us the children of God

A. Read this story—

John 3:1-15

¹There was a man of the Pharisees named Nicodemus, a ruler of the Jews. ²This man came to Jesus by night and said to Him, “Rabbi, we know that You are a teacher come from God; for no one can do these signs that You do unless God is with him.”

³Jesus answered and said to him, “Most assuredly, I say to you, unless one is born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God.”

⁴Nicodemus said to Him, “How can a man be born when he is old? Can he enter a second time into his mother’s womb and be born?”

⁵Jesus answered, “Most assuredly, I say to you, unless one is born of water and the Spirit, he cannot enter the kingdom of God. ⁶That which is born of the flesh is flesh, and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit. ⁷Do not marvel that I said to you, ‘You must be born again.’ ⁸The wind blows where it wishes, and you hear the sound of it, but cannot tell where it comes from and where it goes. So is everyone who is born of the Spirit.”

⁹Nicodemus answered and said to Him, “How can these things be?”

¹⁰Jesus answered and said to him, “Are you the teacher of Israel, and do not know these things? ¹¹Most assuredly, I say to you, We speak what We know and testify what We have seen, and you do not receive Our witness. ¹²If I have told you earthly things and you do not believe, how will you believe if I tell you heavenly things? ¹³No one has ascended to heaven but He who came down from heaven, that is, the Son of Man who is in heaven. ¹⁴And as Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, even so must the Son of Man be lifted up, ¹⁵that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have eternal life.

B. Here in this story, Jesus makes it clear that people must be “born of the Spirit” if he or she wants to get into Heaven

c. Perfect righteousness is required for entrance into Heaven, and none of us are born with it—

Romans 3:10

¹⁰There is none righteous, no, not one...

D. For this reason, we need to be “born again” (also, “regeneration”)—“born of the Spirit”

1. This is a “new birth” into a “new life”

- a. When people are born the first time, he or she enters the world as children of **Adam**—“**condemned sinners**”
- b. When people are “born again”—“born of the Spirit”, he or she is transformed into the children of **God**—“**righteous saints**”

John 1:12-13

¹²...as many as received Him, to them He gave the right to become children of God, to those who believe in His name: ¹³who were born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God.

- c. The “**new birth**” is the start of a “**new life**”—

2 Corinthians 5:17

¹⁷...if anyone is in Christ, he is a **new creation**; old things have passed away; behold, all things have become new.

- d. This “new life” is described in Ezekiel 36:25-27—

Ezekiel 36:25-27

²⁵Then I will sprinkle clean water on you, and you shall be clean; I will cleanse you from all your filthiness and from all your idols. ²⁶I will give you a new heart and put a new spirit within you; I will take the heart of stone out of your flesh and give you a heart of flesh. ²⁷I will put My Spirit within you and cause you to walk in My statutes, and you will keep My judgments and do them.

2. This is the “**regeneration**” from a life that will experience an eternal, on-going **death in Hell** to a life that will experience an eternal, on-going **life in Heaven**

3. In John 3:5-8, Jesus described the new birth as being **supernatural**—a **miraculous** work of the Holy Spirit

E. Regeneration is a powerful and supernatural work of the **Holy Spirit**—

Titus 3:3-7

³For we ourselves were also once foolish, disobedient, deceived, serving various lusts and pleasures, living in malice and envy, hateful and hating one another.
⁴But when the kindness and the love of God our Savior toward man appeared,
⁵not 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**, ⁶whom He poured out on us abundantly through Jesus Christ our Savior,
⁷that having been justified by His grace we should become heirs according to the hope of eternal life.

F. The Holy Spirit regenerates people that **trust in Christ** for salvation—

John 1:12-13

¹²...as many as **received Him**, to them He gave the right to become children of God, to those who **believe in His name**: ¹³who were born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God.

G. When the Holy Spirit regenerates a person, **TWO** things immediately happen:

1. First, the Holy Spirit **indwells** him—

Romans 8:9

⁹...you are not in the flesh but in the Spirit, if indeed **the Spirit of God dwells in you**. Now if anyone does not have the Spirit of Christ, he is not His.

2. Second, the Holy Spirit **seals** him, providing assurance of his salvation—

Ephesians 1:13-14

¹³In Him you also trusted, after you heard the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation; in whom also, having believed, **you were sealed with the Holy Spirit of promise,** ¹⁴who is the guarantee of our inheritance until the redemption of the purchased possession, to the praise of His glory.

H. Application:

1. Are you “born of the Spirit”?
2. Has the Spirit regenerated you to eternal life?

Conclusion

A. “The Valley of Vision”—a collection of Puritan prayers—includes this prayer:

“O God the Holy Spirit,
Thou who dost proceed from the Father and the Son,
 have mercy on me.
When thou didst first hover over chaos,
 order came to birth,
 beauty robed the world, fruitfulness sprang forth.
Move, I pray thee, upon my disordered heart;
Take away the infirmities of unruly desires
 and hateful lusts;
Lift the mists and darkness of unbelief;
Brighten my soul with the pure light of truth;
Make it fragrant as the garden of paradise,
 rich with every goodly fruit,
 beautiful with heavenly grace,

radiant with rays of divine light.
Fulfill in me the glory of thy divine offices;
Be my comforter, light, guide, sanctifier;
Take of the things of Christ and show them to my soul;
Through thee may I daily learn more of his love,
 grace, compassion, faithfulness, beauty;
Lead me to the cross and show me his wounds,
 the hateful nature of evil, the power of Satan;
May I there see my sins as
 the nails that transfixed him,
 the cords that bound him,
 the thorns that tore him,
 the sword that pierced him.
Help me to find in his death the reality
 and immensity of his love.
Open for me the wondrous volumes of truth
 in his, 'It is finished'.
Increase my faith in the clear knowledge of
 atonement achieved, expiation completed,
 satisfaction made, guilt done away,
 my debt paid, my sins forgiven,
 my person redeemed, my soul saved,
 hell vanquished, heaven opened,
 eternity made mine.
O Holy Spirit, deepen in me these saving lessons.
Write them upon my heart, that my walk be
 sin-loathing, sin-fleeing, Christ-loving;
And suffer no devil's device to beguile
 or deceive me."

B. My heart cries out, "AMEN," in agreement to this prayer