

## Ghost Stories Series# 3, Glorious Ghost

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### 2 Corinthians 3:8-9

8 will not the **ministry of the Spirit** be even more glorious? 9 If the ministry that **condemns** men is glorious, how much more glorious is the **ministry that brings righteousness!**

#### Verse 18-

“And we all, with unveiled face, beholding the glory of the Lord, are being transformed into the same image from one degree of glory to another. For this comes from the Lord who is the Spirit.”

***We start in glory we end in glory... and it is the ministry of the Spirit that accomplishes our glorious transformation.***

However somewhere in Christendom we have come to believe that the Holy Spirit is the chief law enforcement agent of heaven. That His ministry is not glorious even though Jesus said, “... I will ask the Father, and He will give you another Comforter (Counselor, Helper, Intercessor, Advocate, Strengtheners, and Standby), that He may remain with you forever.”

#### **SLIDE WITH MAN IN MIRROR ...**

This is often our understanding of the person and work of the holy spirit... convicting us to shape up...

Today want to talk about what the Holy Spirit does by utilizing a method called Negative theology---Also known as *Via Negativa* (Negative Way), which tempts to describe the nature of God (Holy Spirit) by focusing on what God is *not* rather than on what God is.

*Specifically, what the Holy Spirit is not.*

#### **Five Misconceptions about Holy Spirit:**

- **He convicts me**
- **He waits to see if I slip up**
- **He inspires me to fear God**
- **He only comes if I perform right**
- **He makes me hungry and desperate**

Paul Ellis said, “One of the biggest signs that a believer does not fully understand what happened at the cross of the Calvary, is that they are scared of the Holy Spirit and His work. They view him as a Convictor and Policeman even though Jesus called Him the Comforter and Counselor. Their perceptions are shaped by old covenant traditions rather than new covenant truths.”

How many times have we heard Christians say or said ourselves, “the Holy Spirit is convicting me.”

**Or**

“the Holy Spirit uses godly guilt to lead us to repentance... which in words of Paul Ellis makes as much sense as demonic grace.” He said when I feel guilt, it is not evidence of the Holy Spirit, it is evidence I have a conscience.

Fear of conviction is a terrible way to have a relationship with the God Head... I don't want that kind of relationship with anyone, and I especially don't want that kind of relationship with the Holy Spirit...

**So where do we get this idea from... it is a misinterpretation of John 16:8**

*John 16:8 “And when he comes, he (The Holy Spirit) will convict the world concerning sin and righteousness and judgment:”*

I don't know how we got the ministry of the Holy Spirit wrong... Jesus clearly lays out the ministry of the Holy Spirit concerning the world. To convict the world that they are wrong about three fundamental issues: sin, righteousness and judgement

**1. The HOLY SPIRIT DOES NOT CONVICT ME OF SIN HE CONVICTS THE WORLD OF SIN.**

The word convict is used only twice in the NT (a couple of other times depending on version of translation)

Once in Jude 1:15- convict all the [a]ungodly of all the ungodly deeds they have done in an ungodly way, and of all the harsh *and* cruel things ungodly sinners have spoken against Him.”

**And once in reference to the ministry of the Holy Spirit.**

"to convict, the suggestion of putting the convicted person to shame...

KJV Bible Dictionary- to prove or find guilty of a crime charged; to determine or decide to be guilty.... indicted, prosecuted, trial over...

**You can see in both references' conviction is meant for the ungodly or the world.**

He comes to convict the world- (kosmos)

- the whole mass of men alienated from God, and therefore hostile to the cause of Christ

This is not the ministry of the Holy Spirit to me.

AS I am not of this world

- John 17:16- They are not of the world, even as I am not of it.
- Phil 3:20- “But [we are different, because] our citizenship is in heaven...”
- 1 John 5:19 - We know that we are children of God, and that the whole world is under the control of the evil one.
- Eph. 2:19 Consequently, you are no longer foreigners and strangers {to God}, but fellow citizens with God's people and also members of his household

### WHAT SIN IS JESUS TALKING ABOUT?

**John 16:9** “...of sin, because they do not believe in Me; ...” And what is the most basic sin of which the world is guilty? **Jesus specifies it as unbelief.** The convicting power of the Holy Spirit is at work in the world “because they believe not in [Christ].”

**So, it is true that the function of the Holy Spirit is to convict people of sin... but I am no longer one of those peoples... I am a believer and he need not convict me of belief in Jesus.**

One may ask how does the Holy Spirit accomplish this task of convicting the world of its failure to believe?

**Through his mysterious moving's in the hearts of men and through our witness and testimony about the goodness of God. By preaching the good news that your sins are forgiven and you have a God who loves you.**

The scripture tells us that the Holy Spirit is one with the Father & Jesus... Jesus being the exact expressed image of God who manifested self-sacrificial love... and that Jesus as the last Adam brought life... therefore I must conclude that the ministry of the Holy Spirit even to those whom he is convicting is to bring about life, to make manifest in their hearts that God loves them, that He is the giver of good gifts...

2 Cor. 7:17-20

17 Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation.<sup>[a]</sup> The old has passed away; behold, the new has come. 18 All this is from God, who through Christ reconciled us to himself and gave us the ministry of reconciliation; 19 that is, in Christ God was reconciling<sup>[b]</sup> the world to himself, **not counting their trespasses against them**, and entrusting to us the message of reconciliation. 20 Therefore, we are ambassadors for Christ, **God making his appeal through us**. We implore you on behalf of Christ, be reconciled to God. 21 For our sake he made him to be sin who knew no sin, so that in him we might become the righteousness of God.

**God is making his appeal through us and our message is that God is no longer counting their trespasses against them!!!!**

Our job therefore is to listen for His prompting...we call people by sharing the Good News that their sins are forgiven. It's God's kindness that leads people to repentance, (**Romans 2:4**)

**THE HOLY SPIRIT CONVICTS THE WORLD OF RIGHTEOUSNESS- John 16:10**

*“...of righteousness, because I go to My Father and you see Me no more; ...”*

There is a righteous standard we are all held to, and the standard-bearer of righteousness is Jesus.

There is only one Person who came down from heaven, lived a life of sinless perfection, and who ascended back to heaven—the Son of Man, who lives to be our Intercessor (John 3:13; 1 Timothy 2:5).

**The righteousness that the world tries to deny is found demonstrated in Christ. Everything He ever said and did was the consummate expression of God the Father (John 8:28; Colossians 2:9). He is righteousness personified, and none can measure up to Him (Romans 3:23).**

We have no ability to achieve righteousness in and of ourselves. However we possess the righteousness of Christ, because “God made him who had no sin to be sin for us, so that in him we might become the righteousness of God” (2 Corinthians 5:21).

Being right with God is a matter of faith not self-effort. Being right with God and others comes by simply believing in the finished work of the cross which is a manifestation of God’s passionate love for his creatures.

**WE ought to testify Jesus did it right so we can be right... Romans 5:17** *“... those who receive abundance of grace and of the gift of righteousness will reign in life...”*

**THE HOLY SPIRIT CONVICTS THE WORLD OF JUDGEMENT- John 16:11** *“...of judgment, because the ruler of this world is judged.”*

Jesus identifies *Satan* as the one on whom judgment fell: “Because the ruler of this world is cast out.” It was on the cross that Jesus redeemed sinners for God and utterly vanquished Satan. “That by his death he might break the power of him who holds the power of death—that is, the devil” (Hebrews 2:14).

*He is judged and the verdict is he is an accuser, killer, liar and thief.*

*The verdict is he is disarmed, Christ in the cross has triumphed and made the devil a public spectacle.*

**The Holy Spirit testifies that Satan is defeated, the power of sin is broken and that although the devil may try to steal kill and destroy; Christ the triumphant one proclaims life and life more abundantly. The Holy Spirit testifies to the world... you can be made right with God.**

Therefore, on the basis of this scripture one must conclude that the Holy Spirit’s ministry of conviction is not directed toward me but towards those alienated from God. He convinces them

that Jesus is the cure to sin... that God no longer counts their sins against them and that the ruler of this world is judged.

The Holy Spirit does not;

- Indict me
- Judge me
- Prosecute me
- Convict me
- Or render me guilty

He is not my convictor/nor is he my beat cop.

He is the life-giving Spirit.

He does not imprison me He frees me from prison

**“What shall we say in response to this?**

**If God be for us who can be against us?**

**“Who shall bring any charge against God's elect? It is God who justifies. <sup>34</sup> Who is to condemn? Christ Jesus is the one who died—more than that, who was raised—who is at the right hand of God, who indeed is interceding for us.<sup>[a]</sup> <sup>35</sup> Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? Romans 8:33-35**

God, Father Son and Holy Spirit are for me...

Therefore, it begs the question how does God deal with me a saint who sometimes sins?

Don't get us wrong God cares about sin... what loving father wouldn't, however:

- He does not keep a record of my wrongs- love keeps no record of wrongs
- **Hebrews 10:15-17--15** *The Holy Spirit also testifies to us about this. First he says: “This is the covenant I will make with the after that time, says the Lord. I will put my laws in their hearts, and I will write them on their minds.” Then he adds: “**Their sins and lawless acts I will remember no more.**”*
- I don't have a black mark against me
- **The Holy Spirit doesn't condemn, guilt trip or withdraw from me.** He does not come and go dependent upon our behaviour ---Hebrews 13:5- he will never leave us nor forsake us... He does not leave us as orphans... He has given us His Spirit... and he abide and remains... to finish to good work He has begun...
- *As a child of God my sins are toast not me...*
- *What God does via Holy Spirit is correct not convict, disciplines not punish me.*
- *He does not punish, penalize or sanction me- he disciplines me, and he trains for my future*

As an expression of His love and mercy, the Holy Spirit convicts the world of the sin of unbelief in Jesus.

IN me the Holy Spirit as the leads me into all truth he reminds me of all that Jesus said and accomplished. He will always cause me to turn to Christ who is the author and finisher of my faith. He convinces, me that I have become the righteousness of God in Christ 2 Cor. 5:21

The Holy Spirit brings our conversation back to this point; the cross. He didn't come to persuade God's mind about us, but to persuade our minds about God and what He believes about us.

## QUICKLY SOME OTHER MISCONCEPTIONS

2. The Holy Spirit is not watching to see if I slip up and fail to finish.

The Holy Spirit personally guarantees your salvation and inheritance (Eph 1:13-14).

When you were saved you were marked as one of God's own (2 Cor 1:22) and sealed with the Spirit for the day of redemption (Eph 4:30). His hope is a firm and secure anchor for the soul (Heb 6:19). All we do is trust.

3. The Holy Spirit inspires us to fear a holy and distant God.

The Holy Spirit helps you to know and draw near to God your Father (Eph 1:17, Gal 4:6).

"For the Spirit that God has given you does not make you slaves and cause you to be afraid; instead, the Spirit makes you God's children, and by the Spirit's power we cry out to God, 'Father! My Father!'" (Rom 8:15, GNB).

4. The Holy Spirit only comes when you fast, pray, attend some classes, get straightened out, act holy...

The Holy Spirit is received by faith (Gal 3:14).

Did you fast and pray to receive Jesus? Didn't think so. You just received by faith. It's exactly the same with the Holy Spirit. How do we receive the promise of the Spirit? By faith (Gal 3:14)!

"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!" (Lk 11:13)

"Until now you have not asked for anything in my name. Ask and you will receive, and your joy will be complete." (Jn 16:24)

5. The Holy Spirit makes you hungry, thirsty or desperate

Jesus said, "I am the Bread of Life. He who comes to Me shall never hunger, and never thirst" (John 6:35). Unbelievers are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness and they shall be filled.

Once Holy Spirit-filled, it's said you will never hunger, thirst or be desperate for more, since you are filled with His fullness (Col. 2:8).

*Francois du Toit said, "Any message or song that leaves you with a sense of lack and emptiness rather than completeness is a distraction from the truth"*

Desperation is the language of an orphan.

**He is at work in us...**

The Holy Spirit Witnesses to and re-presents Christ

The Holy Spirit is the power of new life in Christ- John 3:1-8, 1 For 15:45

The Holy Spirit is the power of new freedom found in Christ- Gal 5:1, 2 For 3:17, Phil. 2:25Gal 6:2

The Holy Spirit is the power of the new community in Christ sustaining the unity found in Him.

The Holy Spirit gives gifts

The Holy Spirit is the power and promise that guarantees all that Christ promised.

He Comforts Us Acts 9:31

He is not the chief law enforcement agent of heaven!!!