

# Our State of Theology – 9d

*The Holy Spirit: Spirit Who Convicts*

## Romans 3:10–18 (NIV84)

<sup>10</sup>As it is written: “There is **no one righteous, not even one**;

<sup>11</sup>there is no one who understands, **no one who seeks God**.

<sup>12</sup>All have turned away, they have together become worthless; there is **no one who does good, not even one**.”

<sup>13</sup>“Their throats are open graves; their tongues practice deceit.” “The poison of vipers is on their lips.”

<sup>14</sup>“Their mouths are full of cursing and bitterness.”

<sup>15</sup>“Their feet are swift to shed blood;

<sup>16</sup>ruin and misery mark their ways,

<sup>17</sup>and the way of peace they do not know.”

<sup>18</sup>“There is **no fear of God** before their eyes.”

- *Douglas J. Moo*: The human predicament is not that people commit sins; the problem is that they are helpless slaves of sin.<sup>1</sup>

- That no one is righteous indicates **human inability to secure salvation apart from God’s provision**.

This does not mean that people are as bad as they can be, or that they cannot do good things from a human perspective.

- **As to eternal salvation**, their situation is **hopeless so long as they are left to themselves**.

God’s initiating grace must come first.

Righteousness must come from God.<sup>2</sup>

## Romans 8:5–11 (NIV84)

<sup>5</sup>Those who live according to the sinful nature have their minds set on what that nature desires; but those who live in accordance with the Spirit have their minds set on what the Spirit desires.

<sup>6</sup>The mind of sinful man is death, but the mind controlled by the Spirit is life and peace;

<sup>7</sup>the sinful mind is hostile to God. **It does not submit to God’s law, nor can it do so**.

<sup>8</sup>Those controlled by **the sinful nature cannot please God**.

<sup>9</sup>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

<sup>1</sup> Douglas J. Moo, *A Theology of Paul and His Letters: The Gift of the New Realm in Christ*, ed. Andreas J. Köstenberger, Biblical Theology of the New Testament (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan Academic, 2021), 207.

<sup>2</sup> Ted Cabal et al., *The Apologetics Study Bible: Real Questions. Straight Answers. Stronger Faith* (Nashville, TN: Holman Bible Publishers, 2007), 1684.

not belong to Christ.

<sup>10</sup>But **if Christ is in you**, your body is dead because of sin, yet your spirit is alive because of righteousness.

<sup>11</sup>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.

- The unsaved man (*sinful man and mind*) does not submit to God’s law; he does not have the ability to submit to God’s law.

- The unsaved man cannot please God.

- The saved man (*man with the Spirit of Christ*) has the ability and the will to submit to God’s law

- The saved man can please God.

## 1 Corinthians 2:4–14 (NIV84)

<sup>4</sup>My message and my preaching were not with wise and persuasive words, but with a **demonstration of the Spirit’s power**,

<sup>5</sup>so that your faith might not rest on men’s wisdom, but on God’s power.

- **Romans 1:16-17 (NIV84)**

<sup>16</sup>I am not ashamed of **the gospel**, because it **is the power of God for the salvation of everyone who believes**: first for the Jew, then for the Gentile.

<sup>17</sup>For in the gospel a righteousness from God is revealed, a righteousness that is by faith from first to last, just as it is written: “The righteous will live by faith.”

The demonstration of the Spirit’s power is made manifest when a soul is converted to the saving knowledge of Christ.

- According to the standards of this world, the apostle might never have won an oratorical contest. In spite of this, **the Spirit of God used the message to produce conviction of sin and conversion to God**.<sup>3</sup>

- *Charles Spurgeon*: The power that is in the Gospel does not lie in the eloquence of the preacher, otherwise men would be the converters of souls, nor does it lie in the preacher’s learning, otherwise it would consist in the wisdom of men. We might preach until our tongues rotted, till we would exhaust our lungs and die, but never a soul would be converted unless the Holy Spirit be with the Word of God to give it the power to convert the soul.

<sup>6</sup>We do, however, speak a message of wisdom among

<sup>3</sup> William MacDonald, *Believer’s Bible Commentary: Old and New Testaments*, ed. Arthur Farstad (Nashville: Thomas Nelson, 1995), 1752.

the mature, but not the wisdom of this age or of the rulers of this age, who are coming to nothing.

<sup>7</sup>No, we speak of God's secret wisdom, a wisdom that has been hidden and that God destined for our glory before time began.

<sup>8</sup>None of the rulers of this age understood it, for if they had, they would not have crucified the Lord of glory.

<sup>9</sup>However, as it is written: "No eye has seen, no ear has heard, no mind has conceived what God has prepared for those who love him"—

<sup>10</sup>but God has revealed it to us by his Spirit. The Spirit searches all things, even the deep things of God.

<sup>11</sup>For who among men knows the thoughts of a man except the man's spirit within him? In the same way no one knows the thoughts of God except the Spirit of God.

<sup>12</sup>We have not received the spirit of the world but the Spirit who is from God, that we may understand what God has freely given us.

<sup>13</sup>This is what we speak, not in words taught us by human wisdom but in words taught by the Spirit, expressing spiritual truths in spiritual words.

<sup>14</sup>The man without the Spirit does not accept the things that come from the Spirit of God, for they are foolishness to him, and he cannot understand them, because they are spiritually discerned.

- One way the Spirit illumines us is by giving us spiritual discernment—the ability to distinguish good from bad, right from wrong, to make sense out of what is happening.
- Verse 9 talks about the great things God has for us.
- Verse 10 shows that God has revealed these things to us by His Spirit.<sup>4</sup>

### John 3:5–6 (NIV84)

<sup>5</sup>Jesus answered, "I tell you the truth, no one can enter the kingdom of God unless he is born of water and the Spirit.

<sup>6</sup>Flesh gives birth to flesh, but the Spirit gives birth to spirit.

- Likes produce likes. A male dog and a female dog produce puppies rather than kittens. Cats produce cats. Horses produce horses. Plants produce plants. People produce people.
- In the same way, God tells us, that which comes out of the natural man can produce only that which is natural to man, and which is sinful as a result.

<sup>4</sup> Anthony T. Evans, *The Promise: Experiencing God's Greatest Gift, the Holy Spirit* (Chicago: Moody Press, 1996), 119.

Man can produce nothing spiritual.

- That which comes forth from God produces only that which is characteristic of God and which is therefore sinless and eternal.<sup>5</sup>
- Can you explain visible things to a blind man?  
A blind man has no comprehension of light, because he has never seen and cannot see light.
- Neither can you describe spiritual truths to a spiritually blind man?  
A spiritually blind man has no comprehension of spiritual light, because he has never seen nor can he even comprehend what spiritual light is.

### 2 Corinthians 4:3–4 (NIV84)

<sup>3</sup>And even if our gospel is veiled, it is veiled to those who are perishing.

<sup>4</sup>The god of this age has blinded the minds of unbelievers, so that they cannot see the light of the gospel of the glory of Christ, who is the image of God.

- The god of this age, Satan, who as a false god has wielded enormous influence for evil in this world.  
There is only one God, revealed to us as the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ. All other "gods" are but pretenders, deceivers, worthless ideas. We see God not in Satan but in Christ.<sup>6</sup>
- It might surprise us that the world is so slow to believe in its own depravity, and individuals so slow to believe in their need of a saving Gospel, were it not that Scripture lays down very clearly that such knowledge is only kept from those whose minds are blinded by the god of this world.<sup>7</sup>
- When even brilliant intellectuals seem unable to understand and accept the easy-to-understand gospel of Christ, especially His works of creation and redemption, it is because their minds have been blinded to these wonderful truths. We must pray for God "to open their eyes, and to turn them from darkness to light, and from the power of Satan unto God" (Acts 26:18).<sup>8</sup>

### Proverbs 20:12 (NIV84)

<sup>12</sup>Ears that hear and eyes that see-- the LORD has made them both.

- *Only God* gives us the ears and eyes to perceive the

<sup>5</sup> James Montgomery Boice, *The Gospel of John: An Expository Commentary* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Books, 2005), 203–204.

<sup>6</sup> Trent C. Butler, ed., *Disciple's Study Bible: New International Version* (Nashville: Holman Bible Publishers, 1988), 2 Co 4:4–6.

<sup>7</sup> J. H. Buchanan, "The Glorious Gospel," in *The Church Pulpit Commentary: I Corinthians–Ephesians* (London: J. Nisbet & Co., 1908), 239.

<sup>8</sup> Henry M. Morris, *The Defender's Study Bible* (WORDsearch, 2012), 2 Co 4:4.

great treasures and wonders of God!

- It is a blessing, when the Holy Spirit *convicts someone of guilt*.

God has brought that person to the point of recognizing his wrongdoing, which is the first step towards salvation.

### John 6:44 (NIV84)

<sup>44</sup>“No one can come to me unless the Father who sent me draws him, and I will raise him up at the last day.

- *Draw* = ἔλκυω *helkúō* = to pull or drag, requiring force because of the inertia of the object being dragged—‘to pull, to drag, to draw.’<sup>9</sup>

**pull in**, drag, draw, haul in<sup>10</sup>

### John 6:65 (NIV84)

<sup>65</sup>He went on to say, “This is why I told you that no one can come to me unless the Father has enabled him.”

#### John 6:65 (HCSB)

<sup>65</sup>He said, “This is why I told you that no one can come to Me unless it is granted to him by the Father.”

- God is absolutely sovereign in salvation.<sup>11</sup>
- The Father draws and grants a sinner to come to Jesus through the Holy Spirit.

### Romans 7:5–6 (NIV84)

<sup>5</sup>For when we were controlled by the sinful nature, the sinful passions aroused by the law were at work in our bodies, so that we bore fruit for death.

<sup>6</sup>But now, by dying to what once bound us, we have been released from the law so that we serve in the new way of the Spirit, and not in the old way of the written code.

- *Under the law* means trying to be right and please God in our own effort by attempting to obey the law of God. The best we could do was fail; *we bore fruit for death*.
- Through faith in what Jesus Christ did at the cross and His resurrection, we have been released from the law of sin and death, and we now serve *in the new way of the Spirit*.

#### Romans 8:1-2 (NIV84)

<sup>1</sup>Therefore, there is now no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus,

<sup>2</sup>because through Christ Jesus the law of the Spirit of

life set me free from the law of sin and death.

*The Old Way*: system of works that fail and result in death: “You sin; you die.”

*The New Way*: living under the grace and mercy of the Lord. “You sin; He died.”

### John 16:7–11 (NIV84)

<sup>7</sup>But I tell you the truth: It is for your good that I am going away. Unless I go away, the Counselor will not come to you; but if I go, I will send him to you.

<sup>8</sup>When he comes, he will convict the world of guilt in regard to sin and righteousness and judgment:

<sup>9</sup>in regard to sin, because men do not believe in me;

<sup>10</sup>in regard to righteousness, because I am going to the Father, where you can see me no longer;

<sup>11</sup>and in regard to judgment, because the prince of this world now stands condemned.

- *Convict* = ἐλέγγω *elenchō* = to bring a person to the point of recognizing wrongdoing.<sup>12</sup>

- Do all people recognize wrongdoing? No.

The Holy Spirit is the One who brings people to the point of recognizing wrong.

The idea of the word is of cross-examining a person until that person perceives and acknowledges his errors or of reasoning he has not seen yet.<sup>13</sup>

- This convicting ministry of the Spirit of God is done in the soul. The first work of the Holy Spirit in an individual’s soul is that of conviction.

A person has to see himself as God sees him, become alive to his own lostness and desperate need.

- No person is in a condition to be saved who has not first come under this conviction of the Holy Spirit that he or she is lost.<sup>14</sup>

A person must come to the realization that he is lost and is in need of a Savior, One who can rescue him from the wrath of God that is justly due him.

- There is a difference between the accusation of the devil and the conviction of the Holy Spirit, and many Christians do not know the difference. The devil accuses you of sin; the Holy Spirit convicts you of sin.

The Holy Spirit will never convict you of sin that has already been forgiven. The devil will accuse you of sin that has already been forgiven.

<sup>9</sup> Johannes P. Louw and Eugene Albert Nida, *Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament: Based on Semantic Domains* (NY: United Bible Societies, 1996), 207.

<sup>10</sup> James Swanson, *Dictionary of Biblical Languages with Semantic Domains: Greek (New Testament)* (Oak Harbor: Logos Research Systems, Inc., 1997).

<sup>11</sup> John F. MacArthur Jr., *John 1–11*, MacArthur New Testament Commentary (Chicago: Moody Press, 2006), 271.

<sup>12</sup> William Arndt et al., *A Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament and Other Early Christian Literature* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2000), 315.

<sup>13</sup> Rod Mattoon, *Treasures from John*, vol. 2, Treasures from Scripture Series (Springfield, IL: Rod Mattoon, 2006), 193.

<sup>14</sup> John Phillips, *Exploring the Gospel of John: An Expository Commentary*, The John Phillips Comm Series (Kregel Publications; WORDsearch Corp., 2009), Jn 16:8.

- The Holy Spirit will only convict you *specifically*.  
When the Holy Spirit speaks to you about a sin as a Christian, He doesn't speak to you about your sin nature. That's already been dealt with by Calvary.  
He deals with you about the lie you told. Or He deals with you about when you lost your temper, or that matter of pride. He names it; He calls it by name. That is a conviction.  
The Holy Spirit will say, "You cheated on your income tax." Or, the Holy Spirit will say, "You told a lie," or the Holy Spirit will say, "You were unkind to that person." He will put His finger right on the sore spot and push.  
"Lord, if I've committed any sin, forgive me"—that won't get it. The Bible says, "*If we confess our sins ...*" (1 John 1:9)—not *sin*, "sins."  
**Too many of us want to sin retail and confess wholesale.** No, no. We are to name them one by one as the Holy Spirit convicts us.
- The devil will just accuse you vaguely. He'll make you feel bad mostly all over, and you don't even know what it is you've done. He'll just kind of make you feel guilty in general.  
That's a guilt trip the devil is putting on you, not the Holy Spirit.  
If you're a Christian—and you won't have to guess about it—the Holy Spirit will just say, "You did this," or, "You did that."
- The devil will accuse you to make you feel bad, to nullify you, and lead you into despair and despondency. That's accusation. The Holy Spirit will convict you to lead you to confession, and forgiveness, and joy, and happiness.  
You need to learn the difference between accusation and conviction. Conviction draws you to Christ; accusation drives you from Christ.<sup>15</sup>  
**2 Corinthians 7:10 (NIV84)**  
**Godly sorrow brings repentance that leads to salvation and leaves no regret,** but worldly sorrow brings death.
- The word translated "*convict*" (v. 8) has the goal of convincing a person to turn from his or her sin.
- How does the conviction of the Holy Spirit take place?
- How does he call the unbelieving world to repentance and faith?  
He speaks through His disciples. The disciples are the agents the Holy Spirit uses to call the world to

repentance.<sup>16</sup>

### John 16:9 (NIV84)

**in regard to sin, because men do not believe in me;**

- The singular form of *hamartias* (**sin**) refers to the ultimate sin of refusing to **believe in** Jesus Christ. It is that sin that finally damns people, since all others are forgiven when a person believes savingly in Him.

The sole issue that determines people's eternal destiny is how they react to the [Holy] Spirit's convicting ministry concerning their own sin and the provision of forgiveness by grace through Jesus Christ.<sup>17</sup>

### John 16:10 (NIV84)

**in regard to righteousness, because I am going to the Father, where you can see me no longer;**

- Righteousness comes to the world only by the judicial pronouncement of God which changes our status with God. (Not by self-proclamation or by clergy-proclamation in the world.)  
Any self-righteousness or righteousness that the world offers is not sufficient to enter the kingdom of God.

### John 16:11 (NIV84)

**and in regard to judgment, because the prince of this world now stands condemned.**

- The Holy Spirit will convince the world that there is such a thing as judgment, which is proved by the judgment of Satan and the breaking of his power at the cross.  
No one wants to believe in judgment. We want to think that we can do what we wish with impunity (*exemption from punishment; freedom from the injurious consequences of an action*) and that no day of reckoning will come.<sup>18</sup>
- Without the convicting power of the Holy Spirit you would never have seen your need of the Savior. It was the Holy Spirit of God that convicted you of sin.
- Without the Holy Spirit no person would be willing to give up his sin and really turn his back on this world in genuine repentance until the Holy Spirit of God convicts him of the hurtfulness, the hellishness of sin, till the Holy Spirit convicts him that he is under the curse of God, that he is doomed and bound for hell.<sup>19</sup>

<sup>16</sup> Matt Carter and Josh Wredberg, *Exalting Jesus in John* (Nashville, TN: Holman Reference, 2017), Jn 16:8–11.

<sup>17</sup> John F. MacArthur Jr., *John 12–21*, MacArthur New Testament Commentary (Chicago, IL: Moody Publishers, 2008), 197.

<sup>18</sup> James Montgomery Boice, *The Gospel of John: An Expository Commentary* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Books, 2005), 1212–1213.

<sup>19</sup> Adrian Rogers, "*The Holy Spirit: Your Best Friend.*" in *Adrian Rogers Sermon Archive* (Signal Hill, CA: Rogers Family Trust, 2017), Jn 14:15–26.

<sup>15</sup> Adrian Rogers, "*The Cleansing of Sin in the Life of a Christian.*" in *Adrian Rogers Sermon Archive* (Signal Hill, CA: Rogers Family Trust, 2017), 1 Jn 1:3–10.

slow-moving target for the enemy.<sup>20</sup>

- We must raise an awareness and need in our children for their need of a Savior. We must teach our children that Heaven and eternal life with Jesus is not automatic.

May we be conduits of God's grace, truth, mercy and wisdom towards our family and all those around us.

### **John 3:18 (AMP)**

<sup>18</sup>He who believes in Him [who clings to, trusts in, relies on Him] is not judged [he who trusts in Him never comes up for judgment; for him there is no rejection, no condemnation—he incurs no damnation]; but he who does not believe (cleave to, rely on, trust in Him) is judged already [he has already been convicted and has already received his sentence] because he has not believed in and trusted in the name of the only begotten Son of God. [He is condemned for refusing to let his trust rest in Christ's name.]

### **Deuteronomy 6:4–7 (NIV84)**

<sup>4</sup>Hear, O Israel: The LORD our God, the LORD is one.

<sup>5</sup>Love the LORD your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your strength.

<sup>6</sup>These commandments that I give you today are to be upon your hearts.

#### **- Psalm 119:11 (KJV)**

<sup>11</sup>Thy word have I hid in mine heart, that I might not sin against thee.

<sup>7</sup>Impress them on your children. Talk about them when you sit at home and when you walk along the road, when you lie down and when you get up.

- God's commandments are in God's Word.
- Each of us needs to develop a discerning spirit, rooted in the knowledge of right and wrong, and to teach our children how to do the same. The time to begin teaching them discernment is not when they reach adulthood; we teach it to them from the time they are very young.
- We must know right from wrong, not only in theory but in practice. We must know how to apply God's truth to our lives and how to live in obedience to His commandments. That's why Moses instructed us to teach our children God's commandments throughout the day, not just in a half-hour Sunday school lesson.

We are to say plainly to them, "This is right behavior; this is wrong behavior. This is God's commandment. This is the consequence for breaking God's commandment."

An education in right and wrong must occur twenty-four hours a day, every day of the year.

- A child thoroughly trained in God's commandments, who knows right from wrong, has very little trouble discerning Satan at work. He quickly picks up signals that tell him when things are askew; his conscience remains alive and sensitive. So he avoids becoming a

---

<sup>20</sup> Charles F. Stanley, *The Charles F. Stanley Life Principles Bible: New King James Version* (Nashville, TN: Nelson Bibles, 2005), Dt 6:6.