

June 28, 2015

What Do I Believe?

"In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth. Now the earth was formless and empty, darkness was over the surface of the deep, and the Spirit of God was hovering over the waters."
Genesis 1:1-2

"Unless I go away, the Counselor will not come to you; but if I go, I will send him to you. When he comes he will convict the world of guilt in regard to sin and righteousness and judgment...I have much more to say to you, more than you can now bear...But when he, the Spirit of truth, comes, he will guide you into all truth."
John 16:7-15

"Then Peter stood up with the Eleven, raised his voice and addressed the crowd..."this is what that was spoken by the prophet Joel: 'In the last days, God says, I will pour out my Spirit on all people..."
Acts 2:14-21

"But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness and self-control. Against such things there is no law."
Galatians 5:22-23

"Take the helmet of salvation and the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God."
Ephesians 6:17

In our series on our personal and individual belief systems and how they impact our lives daily we have talked about what we believe about God and what we believe about Jesus. Today we want to consider our beliefs about the Holy Spirit and his Word, the Bible.

The Holy Spirit was present with God at the beginning just as Jesus was. It would be impossible to understand the nature of God without talking about the function and character of the Holy Spirit. In the New Testament we see the Spirit descending on Jesus at his baptism, but specifically Jesus promises that he will send the Spirit after his resurrection and that the Spirit will ***"...guide you into all truth."***

Defining the Holy Spirit is as impossible as defining God. The Holy Spirit is God and he can function in any way that God can. In Scripture the Spirit empowers men to do amazing things, but also indwells us and serves as a mark of our salvation. The Spirit guides us and produces fruit in us and connects us in unfathomable ways to God. The truth is we are a bit in awe of the Spirit and not sure what to expect from him.

Sometimes we seem to believe that the Holy Spirit is a feeling magically controlling and guiding us. At other times we seem to believe that the Spirit is ours to control and that we can demand he act at our will.

In many ways a discussion of what we believe about the Holy Spirit must also include a discussion of what we believe about Scripture. Paul tells us that the ***"sword of the Spirit"*** is ***"the word of God."*** Both Peter and Paul attest to the Spirit's function in inspiring all Scripture. The Holy Spirit is the source of Scripture in that he inspired those who wrote it, but is he limited to functioning through Scripture alone as some believe?

The real challenge of thinking about what we believe about anything spiritual is to determine what role our beliefs take in the way we live. If I believe that the Holy Spirit is a powerful guiding force living within me and I am open to his direction in my life then my belief opens me up to his great transformative power. If I believe that the Holy Spirit is only the source of that small voice

that is my conscience then I expect less from his interactions with me. If I believe that the Holy Spirit only functions through Scripture then I limit how much influence he can have in my day-to-day choices.



In every way my beliefs dictate how much or how little the Holy Spirit of God and his Word will influence how I live. So, what do you believe about the Holy Spirit of God? What do you believe about the Word of God, the Bible? Are they the source of powerful influences in how you live and who you are or are they simply interesting topics of conversation?