

March 9, 2022

The Holy Spirit's Work In Interpretation

The Spirit as the Divine Author

God's Divine Revelation: From the Father, Through the Son, By the Spirit
– John 14:14-26; John 16:13; Eph. 3:5; 2 Peter 1:21

Inspiration:

2 Timothy 3:16-17 – “All Scripture is breathed out [inspired] by God and profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, and for training in righteousness, that the man of God may be competent, equipped for every good work.”

Illumination:

Do we need the Spirit to understand God's Word?

1 Corinthians 2:13-14 – “And we impart this in words not taught by human wisdom but taught by the Spirit, interpreting spiritual truths to those who are spiritual. The natural person does not accept the things of the Spirit of God, for they are folly to him, and he is not able to understand them because they are spiritually discerned.”

The Spirit and the Christian Interpreter

Is the Spirit all you need for proper biblical interpretation?

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“When it comes to biblical interpretation, having the Holy Spirit does not mean that the Spirit is all you need... The Spirit does expect us to use our minds, proper interpretive methods, and good study helps to interpret the Bible accurately.” – (Duvall and Hays, *Grasping God’s Word*, 229)

How does spiritual maturity affect our ability to hear the voice of the Spirit (the divine Author) in the Scriptures?

“The Spirit’s work in interpretation is not to change the sense [i.e., the meaning of the text] but to restore us to our senses.” – (Vanhoozer, *Is There a Meaning in This Text?*, 413)

Romans 12:2 – “Do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewal of your mind, that by testing you may discern what is the will of God, what is good and acceptable and perfect.”

What does the Spirit do and not do for us when we attempt to interpret the Bible as Christians?

Ephesians 1:16-19 – “I do not cease to give thanks for you, remembering you in my prayers, that the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of glory, may give you the Spirit of wisdom and of revelation in the knowledge of him, having the eyes of your heart enlightened, that you may know what is the hope to which he has called you, what are the riches of his glorious inheritance in the saints, and what is the immeasurable greatness of his power toward us who believe, according to the working of his great might.

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Reflection For the Week:

Pray by the Spirit through the Son to the Father that the Spirit, who unites you to Christ, will remind you often all the words of Christ so that you may have the mind of Christ to rightly divide the Word of truth in order to live a holy life for the sake of God's name.

Preparation For Next Week:

Read: <https://www.desiringgod.org/articles/bring-the-bible-home-to-your-heart>

Resources For Going Further:

Duvall, J. Scott and J. Daniel Hays. *Grasping God's Word: A Hands-On Approach to Reading, Interpreting, and Applying the Bible*. Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 2012.

Duvall, J. Scott and J. Daniel Hays. *Journey Into God's Word*. Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 2008.

Kostenberger, Andreas J. and Richard D. Patterson. *Invitation To Biblical Interpretation: Exploring the Hermeneutical Triad of History, Literature, and Theology*. Grand Rapids, MI: Kregel Publications, 2011.

Vanhoozer, Kevin J. *Is There Meaning in This Text?: The Bible, The Reader, and the Morality or Literary Knowledge*. Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 1998.