**Lesson 10**

**The Spirit Drawing, Working Faith and Uniting to Christ**

Of “the drawing of the Spirit,” English pastor John Gill says, “the act of drawing is an act of power, yet not of force. The drawing power of the Spirit makes the unwilling heart willing. He enlightens the understanding, bends the will, gives a heart of flesh, sweetly allures by the power of His grace, and engages the soul to come to Christ, and to give up itself to Him.”

**Between Quickening and Conversion—The Spirit’s Drawing**

* As we previously learned, regeneration is a process that begins with spiritual life being imparted to a dead human soul by the quickening of the Holy Spirit and culminates in the regenerated soul being converted to saving faith.
* Between the quickening and the conversion of the human soul there is the drawing ministry of the Holy Spirit.
* The drawing of the Holy Spirit is the part of the process of regeneration in which the Holy Spirit opens our hearts and teaches us about the Savior. The drawing of the Holy Spirit is the process by which He makes the unwilling heart willing to believe.
* Unlike the physical process of gestation, which takes 9 months from conception to birth, the length of time in the process of the Spirit’s drawing is known only to God. It can take days, months or even years.

**Reasons for Ignorance of the Spirit’s Drawing**

The concept of “the drawing of the Spirit” is very mysterious. And because it is mysterious and cannot be detected by empirical means (cannot be seen, touched or measured), most professing Christians discount the role of the Holy Spirit in drawing unbelievers to Christ.

Arthur Pink gives two reasons for why men are ignorant of the Spirit’s drawing.

1. “The religion of the vast majority of people today consists merely in an outward show, having a name to live among men, but being spiritually dead toward God. Their religion comprises little more than bare speculative notions, merely knowing the Word in its letter. The fear of God is not upon them, the love of God does not fill and rule their hearts, the power of God is not working in their souls—they are strangers to it. They have never been the favored subjects of the Spirit’s quickening operation.”

* **In other words**, because they have never experienced the drawing of the Spirit, they don’t believe in His drawing power. It is only when you have experienced the Spirit’s power that you are able to testify to His drawing power. Unbelieving believers only believe in that which they have experienced.

***1 Corinthians 2:14— But a natural man does not accept the things of the Spirit of God, for they are foolishness to him; and he cannot understand them, because they are spiritually appraised.***

2. “With others, the supernatural agency of the Spirit is effectually shut out by the belief that truth will prevail.

* **In other words**, it is the preaching of men and the intellectual understanding of the gospel that leads men to salvation, not the power of the Spirit drawing them. That is why so many people think that evangelism is merely inviting unbelievers to church. They wrongly believe that a smooth, elegant and persuasive presentation of the gospel is what saves, not the Spirit.
* William Arthur (1819-1901; Irish Methodist minister and author. Served in southern India as a missionary)— You may teach a man the holiest of truths, and yet leave him a wretched man. Many good men, by a culpable inadvertence, constantly speak as if the truth had an inherent ascendance over man and would certainly prevail when justly presented. The belief that truth is mighty, and by reason of its might must prevail, is equally fallacious in the abstract, as it is opposed to the facts of human history and to the Word of God. But truth, in descending among us, does not come among friends. The human heart offers ground whereon it meets truth at an immeasurable disadvantage.

**It Is the Spirit Who Draws**

“John the Baptist came preaching ***the baptism of repentance for the remission of sins*** (Mark 1:4), but by what, or rather Whose, power was it that repentance was wrought in the hearts of his hearers?

* Even after the elect have been quickened by the Spirit, a further and distinct work of the Holy Spirit is needed to draw their hearts to actually receive faith in Jesus Christ.
* “None will ever be drawn to Christ, savingly, by mere preaching; no, not by the most faithful and Scriptural preaching. There must first be the supernatural operations of the Spirit to open the sinner’s heart to receive the message. And how can we expect the Spirit to work among us while He is so slighted; while our confidence is not in Him, but in our preaching?
* How can we expect Him to work miracles in our midst, while there is no humble, earnest, and trustful praying for His gracious activities? Most of us are in such a feverish rush to “win souls,” that we have no time for definite, reverent, importunate crying unto the Lord for His Spirit to go before us and prepare the soil for the Seed. Hence it is that the converts we make are but “man made,” and their subsequent lives make it only too apparent unto those who have eyes to see that the Holy Spirit does not indwell them.

**Question:** Pink asks, “how can we expect Him to work miracles in our midst, while there is no humble, earnest, and trustful praying for His gracious activities?” Why is there no humble, earnest and trustful praying for His gracious activities?”

**Reply:**

1. Ignorance of the ministries of the Holy Spirit . . . having never been taught.

2. Unbelief . . . having never experienced the supernatural work of the Holy Spirit in your life

3. Man-centered theology . . . sees no need for the Holy Spirit in salvation

4. It’s both mysterious and miraculous . . . the Spirit is working all around us, every moment, and we have no idea what He’s doing.

**The Natural Man Rejects God**

As the Christian now loves God ***because he first loved us*** (1 John 4:19), so he sought Christ because Christ first sought him (Luke 19:10). Before Christ seeks us, we are well content to lie fast asleep in the devil’s arms, and therefore does the Lord say, ***I am found of them that sought me not*** (Isaiah 65:1).

**Denial of the Drawing Power of the Spirit**

***John 6:44— No one can come to Me unless the Father who sent Me draws him; and I will raise him up on the last day.***

According to John 6:44, the power to come to Christ rests solely with God. Natural man has no ability to seek Christ or even be inclined toward Him. Why is this?

* It is because of failure to perceive the dreadful condition in which the natural man lies, that difficulty is experienced in seeing the imperative need for the Spirit’s drawing power if he is to be brought out of it. The natural man is so completely enslaved by sin and enchained by Satan that he is unable to take the first step toward Christ.

**What the Spirit does to draw the quickened soul**

In drawing the quickened soul to Christ, what does the Holy Spirit do to effectively draw us?

* The renewed heart is moved and melted when it contemplates the holy Savior having our iniquities imputed to Him and having born our sins in His body on the cross.

***1 Peter 2:24— and He Himself bore our sins in His body on the cross, so that we might die to sin and live to righteousness; for by His wounds you were healed.***

* The Holy Spirit holds our sins up to the eyes of our understanding and rakes in our foul hearts, making us conscious of what a stench they are in the nostrils of an infinitely pure God.
* He brings to light and to sight the hidden and hideous things of darkness and convicts us of our vile and lost condition.
* He opens to our view the “horrible pit” in which by nature we lie, and makes us to realize that we deserve nothing but the everlasting burnings. O how truly marvelous that the Third Person of the Godhead should condescend to stoop to such a work as that!
* **In other words**, the Holy Spirit draws us by giving us the ability to see the holiness of God and our own wretchedness and unworthiness.

**The modern church doesn’t hear that message from its pulpits very often!**

**The Spirit’s Drawing the Elect**

“Even after the elect have been quickened by the Spirit, a further and distinct work of His is needed to draw their hearts to actually close with Christ. The work of faith is equally His operation, and therefore is it said, “***we having received*** [not “exercised”!] ***the same spirit of faith***” (2Co 4:13), i.e., “the same” as Abraham, David, and the other Old Testament saints received, as the remainder of the verse indicates. Hence, observe the careful linking together in Acts 6:5, where of Stephen we read that he was “a man full of faith and of the Holy Ghost”; full of “faith” because filled with the Spirit. So of Barnabas we are told, “he was a good man, and full of the Holy Ghost and of faith” (Act 11:24).

**The result of the Spirit’s drawing**

And when the awakened and convicted soul has been brought to Christ for cleansing and righteousness, who is it that brings him to the Father to be justified by Him? Who is it that bestows freedom of access unto Him from Whom the sinner had long been absent in the “far country”?

* Ephesians 2:18 tell us, “***for through him* [Christ, the Mediator] *we both* [regenerated Jews and Gentiles, Old Testament and New Testament saints alike] *have access by one Spirit unto the Father.***”
* It was nothing but the secret and invincible operations of the blessed Spirit that caused you, a wandering prodigal, to seek out Him, Whom before you dreaded as a “consuming fire.” Yes, it was none other than the Third Person of the Holy Trinity Who drew you with the hands of love, and taught you to call God your “Father”!

**How does the Spirit draw?**

We began this lesson with a quote from John Gill . . . “the act of drawing is an act of power, yet not of force. The drawing power of the Spirit makes the unwilling heart willing. He enlightens the understanding, bends the will, gives a heart of flesh, sweetly allures by the power of His grace, and engages the soul to come to Christ, and to give up itself to Him.”

***John 6:44— No one can come to Me unless the Father who sent Me draws him; and I will raise him up on the last day.***

In John 6:44 the term ***draws*** is the Greek word *helkō*, meaning “to drag or haul.” This word calls to mind an obstinate child or donkey (or child that acts like a donkey) that refuses to do as commanded.

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**Question:** But if, as John Gill says, “the act of drawing is an act of power, yet not of force,” how does the Holy Spirit ***draw*** each of our souls against our will without exercising force?

**Reply:** That is the “million dollar question.” How does God work? How does God exert power in drawing us to faith without compelling us by force? As John Gill says of the Spirit . . .

* He makes our unwilling heart willing
* He enlightens our understanding
* He bends our will to His
* He gives each quickened soul a heart of flesh
* He sweetly allures by the power of His grace
* He engages the soul to come to Christ

In the end, as a fish wearies of fighting the fisherman’s constant pulling or the fox becomes weary of running from the hounds, we become frustrated and exhausted in our resistance, our will is bent toward God and we yield to His leading.

**Question:** Of all the ways that the Holy Spirit draws us in the list John Gill gives, which one do you most closely relate to as the means by which the Holy Spirit drew you?

But getting back to the earlier question, how does the Holy Spirit draw each of us? What does He do?

* To answer that is about as easy as answering the question, “how many grains of sand are on the seashore?”
* The fact is, God has an infinite number of ways in which He draws the elect to salvation. Every Christian has a unique story of how the Holy Spirit worked in them and in the events of their lives as part of the drawing process.
* All we can know is that in the sovereign providence of God, the Holy Spirit is in complete control of all people and events. Everything that happens . . . down to the most minute detail . . . is under the authority and control of the Spirit. And as such, He orchestrates every event and circumstance we experience in our lives. The Holy Spirit is limited only by His ability to devise ways to draw us. And being infinitely wise and knowledgeable, He can never exhaust unique ways to bring God’s elect unto salvation.