The Work of the Spirit

Samson began poorly but ended well, so he is counted as a hero of the faith (Hebrews 11:32). Saul began well but ended poorly, and it appears that he was not even saved. How, then, should we understand the work of the Holy Spirit in his life? We need to distinguish between two different categories of the Spirit’s work.

**1. The *spectacular* work of the Spirit**

The Spirit gave Saul—

A. A *prepared* heart

1 Samuel 10:6, 9; Proverbs 21:1

B. A *prophetic* experience

1 Samuel 10:10-13 (also 19:18-24)

C. A *persuasive* command

1 Samuel 11: 5-8

D. A *power* for victory

1 Samuel 11:9-11

**2. The *saving* work of the Spirit**

Old Testament saints who loved God were regenerated by the Holy Spirit just as we are. Jesus rebuked Nicodemus for not understanding the new birth (John 3:3-10) because the Old Testament teaches—

A. Universal *sin and death*

Genesis 2-5; Psalm 51:5; 58:3

B. Human *inability to change*

Jeremiah 13:23; 17:9

C. New life *through the Spirit*

Ezekiel 18:31-32; 36:26-27; 37:1-14

**Concluding Application** –What work of the Spirit impresses you? What work of the Spirit are you seeking for yourself?

**For additional study or family discussion**

1. What did the Lord say to you today through His word? Did you learn some new truth about God or yourself? Did the Lord challenge you, convict you, or encourage you?

2. Saul tried on numerous occasions to kill David. He also slaughtered the priests and their families at Nob because he suspected them of conspiring with David (1 Samuel 22). After that, he could not consult the high priest with the ephod to determine God’s will, so he consulted the witch of Endor before his final battle (1 Samuel 28). How does 1 Chronicles 10:13-14 evaluate him?

3. Matthew 7:21-23 describes certain people who will not enter the kingdom of heaven. What are they able to do in Jesus’ name? Why will they be excluded from heaven?

4. What spectacular spiritual gifts might unsaved people have according to 1 Corinthians 13:1-3)? Remember that those who do not love the Lord Jesus are accursed (1 Corinthians 16:22).

5. Though the Spirit regenerated people in the Old Testament, some aspects of His work were new after Pentecost, including—

* A larger outpouring of the Spirit for the gospel to be preached to all nations (Acts 1:8).
* Giving every believer some spiritual gift for ministering to the body of Christ (1 Corinthians 12).
* An internal testimony to believers that they are children of God the Father (Galatians 4:-7).

6. In the Old Testament, there were clearly men and women who had a heart for God and who genuinely loved Him (e.g. Psalm 73:25-28; 84:2). Since no one can have a new heart apart from the regenerating work of the Holy Spirit, He must have done this saving work in their hearts.