

The PERSON of THE HOLY SPIRIT

“The third person of the Trinity”

Key question

Does the Bible reveal the Holy Spirit as a divine person and if so why is this important?

Key text

John 15:26

“When the Helper comes, whom I will send to you from the Father, that is the Spirit of truth, who proceeds from the Father, He will bear witness of Me.”

Key Definition

The Holy Spirit

The Holy Spirit is the third person of the Trinity who is the power behind the inspiration of Scripture, the regeneration of the believer, and the sanctification of the church. Holy Spirit in New Covenant salvation, uniting the believer with Christ and His church with the effect that power and ability to bear fruit in building the Kingdom is present.

Introduction

1. Why is the Holy Spirit important?
 - a. He is the point at which the Godhead becomes personal to the believer.
 - b. The ministry of the Holy Spirit is a major part of the New Covenant age.
 - c. Current culture stresses the experiential part of the Christian life. This is the realm of the Spirit.
2. History of the doctrine of the Spirit.
 - a. The Spirit is frequently mentioned in both the Old Testament and the New Testament but there is little systematic teaching about Him. Jn.14-17 is the only place where Jesus teaches us about the Spirit.
 - b. Aside from the recognition of the Spirit’s work in guiding the inspiration of Scripture, little attention is given to Him until the late second century.
 - c. It wasn’t until the 4th and 5th centuries that the relationship of the Spirit to the Father and the Son was clarified by Athanasius.

- d. Montanists (late second century, Tertullian) and Novationists were early charismatic groups. Montanism was rejected because of its insistence upon ongoing special revelation in addition to the Scripture.
- e. During the medieval period there was little emphasis on the Spirit.
- f. The reformers simply elaborated on the orthodox view of Athanasius.
- g. The rationalism of the 18th and 19th century tended to ignore the Spirit while revivalism of the same period was centered on the Spirit's work.
- h. The current charismatic renewal has brought about a renewed interest in the Spirit.
 - 1. The modern Pentecostal movement began in Topeka Kansas in 1901 as Charles Parham (a teacher at a small Bible school) laid hands on Agnes Ozman and she spoke in tongues.
 - 2. William J. Seymour (a black holiness preacher) began the Azusa Street (LA) meetings which popularized the movement.

A. The Spirit is a person not an impersonal force.

- 1. Personal pronouns are used of Him.
 - a. Jn.14:16,17,26, 15:26, 16:7,8,13,14
 - b. Rom.8:16, 26; Eph.1:13-14
- 2. Personal characteristics are ascribed to Him.
 - a. Intellect: I Cor.2:11 "No one knows the thoughts of God but the Spirit of God."
 - b. Sensibility: Rom. 8:27, 15:30 "the love of the Spirit"
 - c. Will: I Cor.12:11 distributing to each one --- as he wills
- 3. Personal acts are identified with Him.
 - a. Speaks - Acts 13:2; Rev.2:7
 - b. Reproves - Jn.16:8-11
 - c. Teaches - Jn.14:26
 - d. Prays - Rom.8:26

B. The Spirit is a divine person.

- 1. Specific Scriptures make this point.
 - a. Acts 5:3,4 lie to the H.S. --- not to men, but to God
 - b. II Cor.3:17,18 Now the Lord is the Spirit
- 2. His names suggest His divinity.
 - a. Spirit of God - Matt.3:16
 - b. Spirit of the Lord - Lk.4:18; Acts 5:9, 8:39
 - c. Spirit of YHWH - Jud.3:10
 - d. Spirit of Christ - Rom.8:9; I Pet.1:11
 - e. "Comforter" - Jn.14:16,26, 15:26, 16:7 (the same word is used of Christ in 14:16)
- 3. His attributes support this point.
 - a. Holy - Lk.11:13
 - b. Eternal - Heb.9:14
 - c. Omniscience - I Cor.2:10,11; Jn.14:26, 16:12,13

- d. Omnipotence - Lk.1:35; Gen. 1:2
 - e. Omnipresence - Ps.139:7-10
4. His actions support this point.
 - a. Creation - Ps.104:30; Job 33:4; Gen.1:2
 - b. Regeneration - Jn.3:5,6
 - c. Inspiration - II Pet.1:21
 - d. Raising of dead - Rom.8:11
 - e. Sanctification - II Thess.2:13
 5. He is identified with Jehovah of the O.T.
 - Isa. 6:1-13; Acts 28:25
 - Jer. 31:31-34; Heb.10:15-17
 - II Sam.23:2-3
 - Matt.12:31-32 blasphemy against H.S. (God)
 - I Cor.3:16, 6:19; Eph.2:22 indwelt by H.S. (God)
 6. He is identified with the Father and the Son. Matt.28:19; II Cor.13:14; I Cor.12:4-6; I Pet.1:1-3, 3:18; Matt.3:16-17; Jn.14:16-17
 7. He proceeds from the Father and the Son. Jn.15:26; Ps.104:30; I Cor.2:11-12; Gal.4:6; Rom.8:9

C. **Representations of the Holy Spirit.**

1. Breath or wind - Jn.3:8, Acts 2:1-2
 - a. He is invisible.
 - b. He is sovereign.
 - c. He is heavenly.
 - d. He is powerful.
2. Clothing - Lk.24:49
 - a. He is our protection.
 - b. He is all encompassing.
 - c. He is a point of identification.
3. Dove - Matt.3:16; Mk.1:10; Lk.3:22; Jn.1:32
 - a. He is innocent and pure.
 - b. He is from heaven.
 - c. He is peaceful.
4. Earnest - II Cor.1:22; 5:5; Eph.1:14
 - a. He is a pledge of what is to come.
 - b. He is portion of what is to come.
5. Fire - Acts 2:3
 - a. He is a purifying agent through judgment.
 - b. He is a manifestation of God.
6. Oil - Lk.4:18; Acts 10:38; II Cor.1:21; I Jn.2:20

- a. He is our preparation for ministry.
 - b. He is source of light.
 - c. He is a sign of sanctification.
7. Seal - II Cor.1:22; Eph.1:13; 4:30
- a. He links us to God as our owner.
 - b. He is our security.
 - c. He is a promise of blessing.
8. Servant - Gen.24
9. Water - Jn.4:14; 7:38-39
- a. He is source of eternal life.
 - b. He is source of abundant life.
 - c. He is a source of witness.

D. **How can we know that we are in a relationship with the Spirit?**

1. Pentecost was a promise of the Spirit to all who would believe in Christ. The NT writers assume that every Christian is indwelt by the Spirit of Christ. The Spirit's presence in the early church was not always dramatic nor was he always emotionally sensed.
2. There are certain popular signs of the Spirit's presence that are not fool-proof.
 - a. **A sense of emotional "awe."** This experience can take place in a very secular context (rock concert) as well as a spiritual setting (church meeting).
 - b. **Special gifts for ministry.** Gifts can be and often are used apart from the Spirit's power and values.
 - c. **A changed life.** Many things that have nothing to do with the Spirit, can change one's life.
 - d. **Feelings of peace.** Again we must recognize that feelings of well-being can come from many non spiritual sources.
3. Stronger signs of the Spirit's presence in a person's life.
 - a. A **love** for other Christians that goes beyond the scope of normal attraction.
 - b. A **conviction** of sin that is unexpected.
 - c. A sense of comfort and awe in **worship**.
 - d. A sense of spiritual **illumination** through contact with the Bible.
 - e. An attraction to **Jesus**.

Questions that you should be able to answer.

1. Specific facts you should know.

- a. Why is it important to understand the Biblical teaching on the Holy Spirit?
- b. What aspects of the doctrine of the Holy Spirit was emphasized in the early church?
- c. What is the Biblical basis for the Spirit being a person and not just a force?

2. Issues that you should be able to discuss.

- a. Is there a difference between the Holy Spirit, Spirit of Christ, Spirit of God, the human spirit, and “the Spirit” in the Bible?
- b. Is it proper to pray to the Holy Spirit?
- c. What does it mean to blaspheme against the Holy Spirit?

3. Questions you should wrestle with.

- a. How is the Holy Spirit related to the Father and the Son?
- b. How fundamental is a correct understanding of the Holy Spirit to our faith?
- c. How can we know if we have a relationship with the Spirit?