

The Holy Spirit (part 1)

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Few Bible subjects are as shrouded in mystery and curiosity as the Holy Spirit and the part He plays in our lives. For being such stalwart proponents of the Divine Trinity, it is actually surprising that we (myself included) have allowed ourselves to worship and serve a God about whose Spirit we know so little. Unfortunately, we truly miss out on an amazing person of the Godhead if we neglect the scriptures pertaining to the Spirit. Who is He? What does He do? Is He just as co-equal with God the Father as Jesus Christ the Son? To begin, let us consider the nomenclature, that is, the name of the Spirit, in a scriptural context.

By Many Names, But One Spirit

The Holy Spirit is variously identified in scripture, and knowing His character begins with knowing His identification. He is called:

- “The Spirit” in Luke 4:1;
- “The Holy Spirit” in Acts 2:4;
- “The Spirit of God” in Genesis 1:2;
- “The Spirit of the Lord” in Luke 4:18;
- “The Spirit of Truth” in John 16:13;
- and “The Spirit of Grace” in Hebrews 10:29, among many other passages.

In the same way that the Son and the Father go by multiple titles, it is clear that the same Spirit embodies all of the preceding epithets. He is the perfect realization of holiness, truth, grace, and spirit, without any contradictions. What the Holy Spirit is not, however, is:

- Just an amorphous manifestation of God, like a feeling, a weird dream, or a gust of wind;
- The Word, because it was made clear in John 1 that the Word itself was Jesus, and that Jesus’ message was revealed through the Spirit (John 6:63, John 16:13-14);
- Some divine influence upon our lives, apart from the Gospel. He is not an “it” or a feeling, or an idea, but a definite being with personality distinct from the Father and Son. He is also not your conscience;
- The Father’s personal Spirit, since He is spoken of apart from the Father in many passages (Matthew 3:16-17, John 16:7-13).

The Holy Spirit In The Godhead

The word “Godhead” is mentioned three times in the Bible (Acts 17:29, Romans 1:20, Colossians 2:9). Each person of the Godhead is mentioned, specifically, in Matthew 28:19, speaking of baptizing individuals in the names of the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, and also in Ephesians 2:18, Romans 15:30, 2 Corinthians 13:14, Ephesians 4:4-6 and most of 1 John 5. The three persons of the Godhead have three distinct offices, or divisions of labor, but each of them possesses the qualities of deity, authority,

and perfect agreement in will. They are One in the sense of any kind of “-hood” being one. We say that a brotherhood is one entity, but is made up of many individuals (1 Corinthians 12:27). A marriage, also, is the union of two people (Genesis 2:24), but we do not call them “one” in a literal sense. A husband certainly cannot take his ill wife’s medicine and expect her to get well. Also, there are 6 billion humans in this world, yet they all make up one humanity. Saying there is one God with three persons is the same as saying there are billions of people, but one humanity. The Father, the Son, and the Spirit are equally God and equally individual at the same time. They are unified, but unique.