



**“But the Comforter, which is the Holy Ghost, whom the Father will send in my Name, he shall teach you all things, and bring all things to your remembrance, whatsoever I have said unto you,” John 14:26.**

## **The Holy Spirit**

**Lesson Aim:** To study Article 9 of our Doctrinal Statement.

**L316. Date:** October 1969. **Text:** John 14:16-26.

**Topic:** Doctrine: Studies In; Holy Spirit.

INTRODUCTION — One of the most blessed doctrines in all the Bible for believers is also one of the most neglected! This is the teaching of the Word concerning the person and work of the Holy Spirit—the third person of the divine trinity of God.

The Bible makes many references to the Holy Spirit. He is referred to 90 times in the Old Testament and approximately 260 times in the New. The Gospels have 56 passages concerning Him, the Acts of the Apostles has 57 passages, Paul's Epistles have 112 passages, and the other books have 36 passages. Only in Philemon and II John and III John is the Spirit not named.

We talk about “church work,” “social work,” or “mission work,” but the Bible talks about the Spirit's work. This blessed doctrine is neglected, misunderstood and perverted in our materialistic society.

Dr. R. A. Torrey lists six reasons for this neglect. (1) It is impossible to understand the doctrine by mere human reason and so it is known only by spiritually minded men, I Corinthians 2:14. (2) He is called the “third” person of the Godhead; this leaves the impression that He is less important than the Father or the Son. (3) Many refer to Him as “it,” so leaving the impression that He is a mere influence and not a person. (4) The emotional excesses of some tend to defame the Holy Spirit and make others fear the “wild fire” which He is accused of setting. (5) Some fear to deal with Him lest they commit the unpardonable sin against Him unwittingly. (6) The use of the term “Holy Ghost” in the King James Version of the Bible confuses

many who know not the Bible.

## EXPOSITION

### I. HIS DIVINE PERSON

Consider the alternatives. Either the Holy Spirit is a divine person or else He is merely an influence; an exertion of divine energy. He is a “Someone” or a “something.” The Bible says He is a “Someone” with whom we have to do.

He is “The Holy Spirit.” He is “the” Holy Spirit (rather than “a” Holy Spirit) because He is unique, the only One who can be called “Holy Spirit of God.”

He is the “Holy” Spirit. This term is used some 100 times in reference to Him. He is the Spirit of a holy God. He is essentially holy in character. He represents a holy Saviour. He transforms believers into holy persons.

He is the Holy “Spirit.” That means He is spirit in His essential nature just as is the Father, John 4:24. He does not have a visible body as the Son does. He stands in contrast to the material. But the fact that He is spiritual in nature does not make Him any less real. He is “The Holy Spirit of God.”

1. Proof of His personality. (1) The Holy Spirit has all the attributes of personality: understanding (I Corinthians 2:10-11), will (I Corinthians 12:11), emotion (Ephesians 4:30; Romans 15:30), and power of moral judgment (John 16:8). It is in these qualities that He is distinguished from an impersonal force or influence. The wind has none of these. It is impersonal. But the Holy Spirit has them for He is a person.

Even our relationship to the Holy Spirit denotes personality. He produces personal holiness in us. He affords personal guidance in our lives. He extends a divine call to special tasks in special fields. This is not the work of an impersonal power but a personal ministry of the Spirit of God.

(2) References in the Bible to the Holy Spirit clearly indicate His personality. The personal pronoun “He” is used to refer to the Spirit. Jesus uses “he” no less than eight times in John 16:13-14. Impersonal objects (wind, houses, vegetation, power) are called “it” not “he.” The same pronoun used to refer to the Holy Spirit in John 16:7-8, 13-15 is used to refer to Jesus in I John 2:6; 3:3, 5, 7, 16.

(3) The Holy Spirit is related to persons in such a way as to demonstrate His personality. He is said to come to take the place of the Lord Jesus with the believers, John 14:16; 16:7. No one but a person can take the place of a person. His name is placed equally with the Father and the Son

(both of whom are persons) in such away as to indicate personality, Matthew 28:19; II Corinthians 13:14. This is no impersonal influence of power but a personal Presence which is indicated.

(4) The activities of the Holy Spirit also indicate personality. Examine Acts 13:2; 16:6-7; 20:28 at this point. Here the Holy Spirit is seen calling missionaries, overseeing the church, and commanding the service of men. It is said that He hears (John 16:13), speaks (Acts 10:19), intercedes (Romans 8:26), teaches (John 14:26), comforts (John 16:7), guides (John 16:13), reveals (John 16:14-15), etc. Is this the activity one would expect from an impersonal force? No, these are acts of a person.

He can be lied to, Acts 5:3. He can be treated spitefully, Hebrews 10:29. He is grieved when men rebel against His gracious promptings, Ephesians 4:30. Again these are reactions of personality. Could one lie to the wind? Could one treat spitefully the force of gravity? Is the sunlight grieved when men sin? No. Only a person responds thus. The Holy Spirit is affected as a person by the acts of others.

(5) The Holy Spirit is called by names which indicate personality. True, the Holy Spirit is called "breath, wind, power." True, symbols used in speaking of Him are oil, fire, water, etc. But other names given Him clearly indicate personality.

In Acts 5:4 the Holy Spirit is called "God." In II Corinthians 3:18 He is called "Lord." In I Corinthians 3:16 the title given Him is "the Spirit of God," while Romans 8:9 it is the "Spirit of Christ." If God is personal, the Spirit is personal. If Christ is personal, the Spirit is personal.

2. The nature of His personality. The Holy Spirit is not only a person, He is a divine person. (1) His names are the names of God. He is called "the Spirit of God" 13 times; "the Spirit of the Lord" 23 times; "the Spirit of the Lord God" one time; "My Spirit" 16 times; "His Spirit" 7 times; etc.

Forty four times His name is related to the name of God the Father. Six times His name expresses relation to God the Son. One hundred and fifteen times His name expresses His own essential deity. The Holy Spirit is the Divine Spirit.

Even the works ascribed to the Spirit indicate his deity. These are the works which God alone can perform. They include creation (Genesis 1:2), casting out demons (Matthew 12:28), conviction of sin (John 16:8), regeneration (John 3:8; Titus 3:5), and resurrection (Romans 8:11). The Holy Spirit can do these works because He is one with God for who but God could do such works as these?

Even the perfections of the Spirit are the perfections of God. He is "the eternal Spirit" who is uncreated but proceeds timelessly from the Father,

coeternal with Father and Son, Hebrews 9:14. He is omnipresent—everywhere at the same time—as indicated by the question, **“Whither shall I go from thy Spirit? . . .”** Psalm 139:7-10. Over 100 times He is called the “Holy” Spirit thus sharing the holiness of God, Ephesians 4:30. The same sovereignty ascribed to the Father and the Son must be admitted as belonging to the Spirit also. He is deity.

The same worship ascribed to Father and Son must be also given to the Holy Spirit. The baptismal formula of Matthew 28:19-20 is an ascription of worship to all three of the divine Trinity. In II Corinthians 13:14 prayer is addressed to the Spirit, as well as to the Father and Son, since apostolic benedictions are always prayers. He is worthy to receive worship for He is God.

3. The rejection of the Holy Spirit is most serious. It is the same as rejecting God. One cannot receive the Son and reject the Spirit. No one can reverence the Father and despise the Spirit. **“For through Him (Jesus) we both have access by one Spirit (the Holy Spirit) unto the Father,”** Ephesians 2:18.

All our relationships with God in this dispensation are through the Holy Spirit. To reject Him, therefore, is to cut off all access to God. This is why “blasphemy against the Holy Spirit shall not be forgiven unto men,” Matthew 12:31. The Holy Spirit alone makes effective the grace of God the Father and the sacrifice of God the Son. To reject the Spirit is to reject the Triune God.

Only those with a willful, persistent, contemptuous, and malignant spirit would resist the divine truth of grace made known to the heart by the power of the Holy Spirit. But once one comes to this frame of mind and set of the will, there is no forgiveness possible for him.

## II. THE WORK OF THE HOLY SPIRIT

1. Conviction. The Holy Spirit comes to the sinner and makes known to him the extent and seriousness of his sin. He convicts of the sinfulness of unbelief, of the kind of righteousness which God accepts, and of the certainty of judgment against sin, John 16:8-11. By bearing witness to the Lord Jesus the Spirit makes man see his undone condition.

On the day of Pentecost, when men heard the message of Jesus the Holy Spirit pricked them in their hearts and they said, “What shall we do?” Acts 2:37. It is the work of the Divine Spirit to cause men to see their sinful and lost condition and seek the Lord Jesus in penitent faith.

2. Conversion. The Holy Spirit works the miracle of regeneration in the

heart of each person who is saved. Thus it can be said that one is saved when he is “born of the Spirit,” John 3:5-8. This is “that act of God by which the governing disposition of the soul is made holy, and by which, through the truth as a means, the first holy exercise of this disposition is secured.” -A. H. Strong. The power which saves is the power of God made effective by the Holy Spirit.

3. Sealing. The very instance a sinner repents and trusts Jesus as Saviour, he is redeemed. As a part of the redemptive deed, the believer is sealed by the Holy Spirit. Two scriptures speak on this point. “. . . **In whom also after that ye believed, ye were sealed with that Holy Spirit of promise, Which is the earnest of our inheritance. . .**” Ephesians 1:13-14. And we are said to be “sealed unto the day of redemption,” Ephesians 4:30.

Sealing by the Holy Spirit suggests three things. (1) The transaction is finished and salvation is made sure and eternal to our souls. (2) Ownership is certified and the believer is from henceforth God's own, II Timothy 2:19. (3) The redemption is guaranteed by the presence of God's own Spirit and the believer lives in security from falling,

4. Indwelling. The seal is not something the Spirit gives or does, it is Himself! That which designates a finished transacted divine ownership, and absolute eternal security is the presence of the Holy Spirit in the heart of the believer,

Each believer can be sure the Holy Spirit abides within him. God says so! See John 14:17, 23. Absence of the Holy Spirit is an indication that one is unsaved, Romans 8:9. The indwelling presence of the Spirit is the source of the believer's life and joy. It is like a well of water that springs up unto eternal life, John 4:13-14; 7:37-39.

Indwelling is determined by conversion not sanctification. Each believer, however weak and imperfect he may be, has the indwelling of the Spirit. Here is the hope for spiritual growth, victory, and service. The believer is never alone; God is always with and within him through the ministry of the Holy Spirit.

5, Instruction. One ministry of the indwelling Holy Spirit is to teach believers so as to direct them into the understanding of and obedience to all truth, John 14:25-26; 16:12-15. He directed the writing of the Word by inspiration (I Peter 1:21; II Timothy 3:16) and confers understanding of the Word by illumination, Psalm 119:18; Job 32:8.

His instruction is essential. First Corinthians 2:10-12 clearly states that no man can understand the things of God by unaided human reasonings. Only the Spirit of God can understand the things of God. Man understands, them as the Spirit makes them real to him and teaches him, “The spirit of

wisdom and revelation” manifests Himself as “the eyes of your understanding” are enlightened that you might know the things “freely given us of God,” Ephesians 1:17-18; I Corinthians 2:12.

6. Guidance. The Holy Spirit guides the believer in all details of daily living. This is one indication that one is saved: **“For as many as are led by the Spirit of God, they are the sons of God,”** Romans 8:14.

The Spirit always directs in the ways of truth. Jesus promised, **“Howbeit when he, the Spirit of truth, is come, he will guide you into all truth. . .”** John 16:13. Hence, He leads according to the principles of God's Word since, **“Thy word is truth,”** John 17:17. The Spirit guides into service. He directs in ways of holiness of thought and deed. He turns people toward the church. He puts it in the heart to pray for sinners.

7. Sanctification. God's purpose is that each believer may be “conformed to the image of His Son.” This is sanctification.

Sanctification is the work of the Spirit just as election is the work of the Father and atonement is the work of the Son, I Peter 1:2. Salvation in its fullness is realized “through sanctification of the Spirit and belief of the Truth,” II Thessalonians 2:13.

At the moment one trusts Jesus as Saviour, he is set apart unto God as His own dear child. The Holy Spirit who comes to live within him begins immediately the ministry of forming the likeness of the Lord Jesus in the believer. More and more the “fruit of the Spirit” is manifest in the believer as he is able “with open face” to behold the glory of the Lord and is “changed into the same image from glory to glory, even as by the Spirit of the Lord,” II Corinthians 3:18.

8. Intercession. The Holy Spirit helps the believer pray! When one prays “in the Spirit” he offers petitions which the Holy Spirit puts in his heart. (Such petitions will assuredly be answered since they are inspired of God.) Offering the Spirit's petitions, we do not have to worry about “much speaking” before God, Matthew 6:7-8.

But the Spirit also takes the petitions we offer and fashions them into heavenly language, thus presenting them before God. **“Likewise the Spirit also helpeth our infirmities: for we know not what we should pray for as we ought: but the Spirit itself maketh intercession for us with groanings which cannot be uttered . . . because he maketh intercession for the saints according to the will of God,”** Romans 8:26-27. Pray with confidence, my brother, the Holy Spirit of God helps you in prayer!

9. Empowers. There is an anointing of the Holy Spirit in which the believer is made sufficient for the service God ordains for him. This anointing may be for knowledge and teaching, I John 2:27. It may be also

for service, Acts 1:8.

Eyen Jesus, the divine Son of God, did His work on earth in the power of the Holy Spirit! “. . . **God anointed Jesus of Nazareth with the Holy Ghost and with power: who went about doing good. . .**” Acts 10:38. Jesus testified, “**The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, because he hath anointed me to preach. . .**” Luke 4:18.

This is why Jesus promised, “. . . **He that believeth on me, the works that I do shall he do also; and greater works than these shall he do; because I go to my Father,**” John 14:12. When Jesus returned to the Father the Holy Spirit was sent to indwell and empower all who believe in Him. Through His power they can do spiritual works as Jesus promised. Jesus worked through the power of the same Spirit.

The Holy Spirit comes upon men to empower them for service. He gave Joseph administrative and governmental powers, Genesis 41:39. He qualified Moses and 70 elders with leadership ability, Numbers 11:17-29. He authorized Joshua as the successor of Moses, Numbers 27:18. He filled Saul and David making them capable kings, I Samuel 10:7.10; I Samuel 16:13-18. He made Samson strong in body beyond other men, Judges 14:6, 19; 15:14. He has qualified soldiers, statesmen, priests, prophets, apostles, disciples and multitudes of unknown believers.

He will also empower you to serve Jesus. His presence and power are the fulfillment of the promise by Jesus, “**But ye shall receive power, after that the Holy Ghost is come upon you: and ye shall be witnesses unto me . . . unto the uttermost part of the earth,**” Acts 1:8.

CONCLUSION-The Holy Spirit is the third person of the Godhead. With the Father and the Son, He completes the Holy Trinity. He shares with them the divine attributes and ministry. All our relations with God in this dispensation are via the Holy Spirit.

Four times He is called “the seven Spirits of God,” Revelation 1:4; 3:1; 4:5; 5:6. Yet, there are not seven Spirits, only One! The numeral “seven” suggests perfection. There are seven colors in the spectrum of light and seven notes of music in the scale. Just so, the Holy Spirit is the perfect Spirit of God.

In this dispensation the Holy Spirit of God resides within each believer in Christ. He executes His ministry through them. Their work is really His work. He qualifies them with spiritual gifts and empowers them with the energy of God by the Spirit.

Today the believer is regenerated, indwelt, enlightened, endued, empowered, guided, and totally saturated by the Holy Spirit. He has the mind of the Spirit and is led by the Spirit. This the Bible teaches. This we

believe.

## **QUESTIONS**

1. Who is the Holy Spirit?
2. Why is He called a “holy” Spirit?
3. Why is this doctrine so neglected today?
4. Why is His personality such an important truth?