

The Holy Spirit

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 . . . (NASB) John 15:26

Magic? Simon was no ordinary magician. He did not just do magic; he did great magic. He astonished the people of Samaria so much they called him the “Great Power of God.” The attention he received from them was impressive. (Many of us today would like that kind of honor or power.) But along came some strangers, Philip first, and then the apostles Peter and John. Simon had been watching them do signs and perform miracles. One day he saw a “magic trick” he wanted. “Give this authority to me as well, so that everyone on whom I lay my hands may receive the Holy Spirit,” he said. He wanted more power! Some in the church today see another person ministering for the Lord, and they become jealous. Just like Simon, they want significance. Just like Simon, some do not understand the Holy Spirit or how He works. Simon was not alone. Who is the Holy Spirit, and how does He work? This lesson will explore those questions. If you desire to know more about the Holy Spirit, this study is for you.

SHORT HISTORY. In A.D. 215, Sabellius claimed the Holy Spirit was one of three characters (the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit) who were played by a single actor. Sabellius rejected the idea that God was a plural-one. This major false teaching was accepted by many Christians. One would think that Christians would have known the truth.

One hundred years later, Arius (approx. A.D. 325) said the Holy Spirit was a created being - created by Jesus. He believed and taught that God had created Jesus, and Jesus had created the Holy Spirit. The Council of Nicea was convened in A.D. 325 and the council rejected this teaching as heresy.

Then Macedonius taught that the Holy Spirit was not God but was simply a creature. This false teaching was also rejected by the Council of Constantinople in A.D. 381 which finally affirmed the truth: the Holy Spirit was God. At this council the Athanasian Creed (4th - 5th century) was established. It clearly said the Father, Son and Holy Spirit were one God. Would you like to know what the Bible says?

I AM GOD. Acts 5:3-5 is an important passage that proves the Holy Spirit is God. We are told that a couple in the early church sold some land they owned, kept part of the money for themselves, and then went to church and claimed they were donating

Athanasian Creed - Excerpt

For there is one Person of the Father; of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit, is all one: the Glory equal, the Majesty coeternal. Such as the Father is: such as the Son, and of the Holy Spirit, is all one: the Glory equal, the Majesty coeternal. Such as the Father is: such as the Son: and such is the Holy Spirit. The Father uncreated: the Son uncreated: and the Holy Spirit uncreated. The Father incomprehensible: the Son incomprehensible: and the Holy Spirit incomprehensible. The Father eternal: the Son eternal: and the Holy Spirit eternal. And yet there are three eternal: but one eternal. And also there are not three uncreated: nor three incomprehensibles, but one uncreated and one incomprehensible . . . So the Father is God: the Son is God: and the Holy Spirit is God. And yet they are not three Gods: but one God . . . one Lord . . .

all of it. It was a lie. So, Peter says,

Ananias, why has Satan filled your heart to lie to the Holy Spirit, and to keep back some of the price of the land? While it remained unsold, did it not remain your own? And after it was sold, was it not under your control? Why is it that you have conceived this deed in your heart? You have not lied to men, but to God. (NASB) Acts 5:3-5

Peter says Ananias lied to the Holy Spirit (v. 3). Then he adds something remarkable, “You have not lied to men, but to God.” Peter makes it clear that the Holy Spirit and God are the same. Here are some other passages that show us that the Holy Spirit is God.

1. According to Hebrews 9:14 how is the Holy Spirit different from human beings?

2. Therefore, the Holy Spirit also existed when . . . (Genesis 1:2)?

3. According to Job 33:4, what role did the Holy Spirit have in your birth?

4. God is different from us in many ways. One of His unique characteristics is true of the Holy Spirit. What is this characteristic according to Ps. 139:7? _____
5. Isaiah 40:13-14 tells us the Holy Spirit has another characteristic. What is it?

6. A characteristic of the Spirit of God that belongs only to God and we often overlook is found in John 14:26. Two of the letters from this word are “o” and “y.” What is the characteristic?

7. Jesus told the Jewish leaders they were guilty of denying that the Holy Spirit was God. What word did He use in Matthew 12:31 to communicate this idea?

Names of the Holy Spirit

Spirit of God	Matt. 3:16	Spirit of Jesus	Acts 16:7	Spirit of Holiness	Rom. 1:4
Spirit of the Lord	Luke 4:18	Spirit of Jesus Christ	Phil. 1:19	Spirit of Grace	Heb. 10:29
Spirit of Our God	1 Cor. 6:11	Spirit of His Son	Gal. 4:6	Spirit of Adoption	Rom. 8:15
Spirit	Num. 11:25	Spirit of Counsel and Might	Isa. 11:2	Spirit of Faith	2 Cor. 4:13
Spirit of Glory	1 Pet. 4:14	Spirit of the Living God	2 Cor. 3:3	Helper	John 14:26
Spirit of the Lord God	Isa. 61:1	Spirit of Truth	John 14:17		

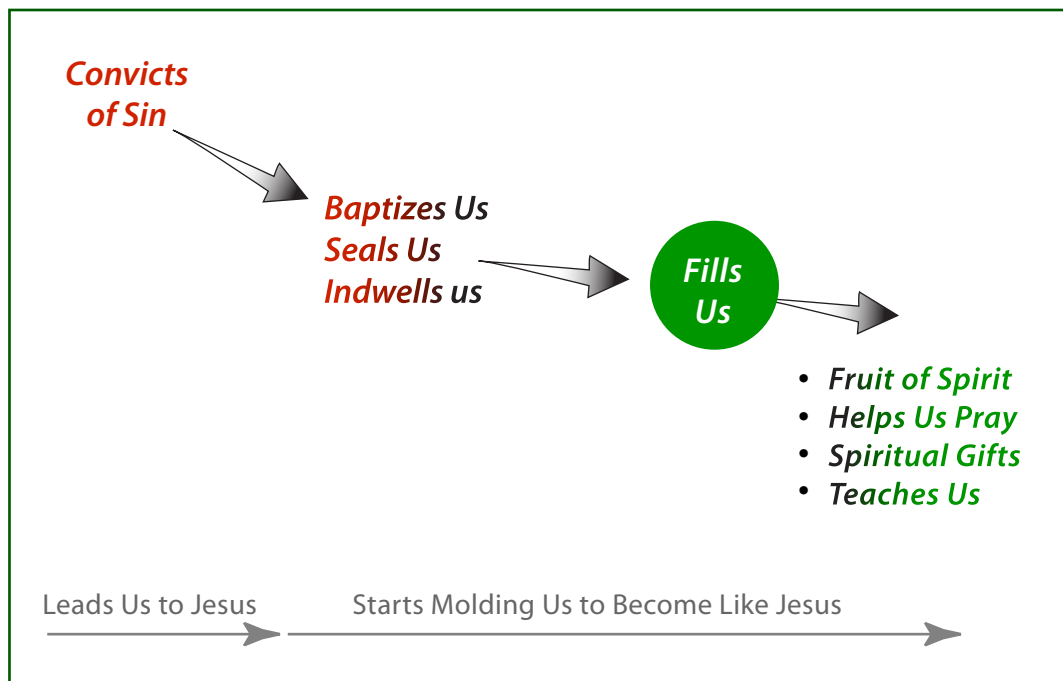
I AM A PERSON. The Spirit of God is a person with emotion, a will and intelligence. He is not simply an abstract power. He is known as the Spirit, the Holy Spirit, the Spirit of Truth and by many other names. The Spirit is never referred to as “it” but as “He” or “Him” (John 14:16, 17, 26; 15:26). Look up the following passages and find a characteristic of the Holy Spirit which reveals that He is a person.

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| 8. Eph. 4:30 | _____ | 12. 1 Thess 1:6 | _____ |
| 9. John 15:26 | _____ | 13. 1 Thess 5:19 | _____ |
| 10. Acts 10:19-21 | _____ | 14. 2 Pet. 1:20-21 | _____ |
| 11. Hebrews 2:4 | _____ | 15. 1 Cor. 2:13 | _____ |

I HELP YOU. Each person in the Trinity has different roles. God the Father has the leadership role. It is He who has planned the future of the world and ourselves (Matt. 24:36). He has developed the master plan for our salvation: He predestined us, forgave us, revealed the future and has given us an inheritance in heaven (Eph. 1:3-14). It is the Father whom the Son of God and the Holy Spirit willingly and freely serve (John 4:34 and 14:26). It is His will that is done in heaven (Matt. 6:9-10).

God the Son - Jesus Christ - is our Savior from sin (2 Peter 1:11), our High Priest who cares for us (Heb. 3:1) and the coming King who will reign (Isa. 9:6; John 18:37). By Him all things came into existence and all things are maintained. The Holy Spirit serves both the Father (Gal. 4:6) and Jesus (John 15:26). He was active in the creation (Gen. 1:2) and has moved men to write scripture (2 Pet. 1:20-21). He is the author of the divine Bible. Today, the Holy Spirit is actively involved in the lives of men and women on this planet. The following questions will reveal how He ministers to us.

16. The Holy Spirit helps us become Christians. How does He do that according to John 16:8 -10?



17. The Holy Spirit helps us become Christians in another way. What is the other way according to 1 Cor. 2:10-14 and 1 John 5:7?

18. At the moment we believe that Jesus is God and start trusting Jesus to forgive our sins, the Holy Spirit places us into a community of Christians called the “body of Christ.” This happens one time. What is this called, according to 1 Cor. 12:13?

19. The Holy Spirit also does some other things with us and for us. What are they?

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| a. Eph. 1:13 | _____ | f. Titus 3:5 | _____ |
| b. 1 Cor. 12:3 | _____ | g. 1 Cor. 12:7-11 | _____ |
| c. Rom 8:9 | _____ | h. Gal. 5:16-21 | _____ |
| d. Rom. 8:26-27 | _____ | i. Eph. 5:18 | _____ |
| e. 1 Cor. 2:13 | _____ | j. Gal. 5:22-23 | _____ |

WOULD YOU LIKE TO KNOW ME? How did the world come into existence? Some believe that we have life and breath because of random chance. They contend that something “wonderfully small” such as an atom existed long ago. After millions of years of chance events, a living creature in the ocean appeared. All that was needed was time and endless interactions. How do they know? Were they there? How did the “wonderfully small” thing come into existence? Now that is the real question, is it not? Forget evolution. The real question is where did anything come from? We do not understand how something came from nothing, but amazingly the Bible solves our problem. The answer is God. Where did He come from? John 5:26 says this,

... the Father has life in Himself . . . (NASB) John 5:26

God has life in Himself. He self-exists. How is that possible? Only God knows the answer and from Him everything flows. Since God is God the Father, Jesus Christ, and the Holy Spirit, who created the world according to the following verses?

20. Eph. 3:8-9 _____
21. John 1:3 _____
22. Col. 1:15-16, 19 _____
23. Gen. 1:2 _____

What did the Holy Spirit do after the world was created? While you look at the passages ask, “Did God create everything and then just ignore us?” Before Jesus took the form of a man and lived on this planet, the Holy Spirit was influencing the Old Testament prophets and guiding them as they wrote the scriptures. The Apostle Peter says this,

As to this salvation, the prophets who prophesied of the grace that would come to you made careful searches and inquiries, seeking to know what person or time the Spirit of Christ within them was indicating as He predicted the sufferings of Christ and the glories to follow. It was revealed to them that they were not serving themselves, but you, in these things which now have been announced to you through those who preached the gospel to you by the Holy Spirit sent from heaven—things into which angels long to look. (NASB) 1 Pet. 1:10-12

... for no prophecy was ever made by an act of human will, but men moved by the Holy Spirit spoke from God. (NASB) 2 Pet. 1:21

Did God ignore us? Did God care about us? Who did the prophets serve according to 1 Pet. 1:10-12? Who was the Holy Spirit helping? The answer is wonderful, “Mankind!”

The Holy Spirit has been active among us since the creation of the world and down to the time of Jesus Christ. What did He do according to the medical doctor Luke?

24. What did the Holy Spirit do in Luke 1:35?

25. At some time after Jesus became a man, there came a time for Him to be tested. What did the Holy Spirit do according to Matthew 4:1?

26. The Holy Spirit did some other things in Jesus’ life. What are they, according to Luke 4:1; 4:14, and 10:21?

It is amazing that the Holy Spirit was active in Jesus’ life and ministry. It is incredible to know that Jesus depended upon the Spirit to help Him do His ministry. Was the Holy Spirit already active in the lives of people? The answer is yes; but according to Jesus, there was more that He would accomplish. According to John 14:16, 26; 15:26; and 16:7, the Holy Spirit was yet to come. What did Jesus mean? In Luke 24:49 Jesus tells His Apostles that the Holy Spirit is yet to come. If the Holy Spirit was already among us, what did Jesus mean that the Holy Spirit was coming? Jesus was saying that the Holy Spirit was coming or would be active in a different way. The Holy Spirit was coming to live within people. All throughout the Old Testament, the Holy Spirit came upon people; but in the New Testament the Holy Spirit now lives inside those who believe in Jesus. For the first time in scripture, we see this statement,

Now He who establishes us with you in Christ and anointed us is God, who also sealed us and gave us the Spirit in our hearts as a pledge. (NASB) 2 Cor. 1:21-22

This is new. Today the Holy Spirit lives within us when we believe in Jesus Christ. He is our guarantee that we will be in heaven some day.

CONCLUSION. We have discovered that the Holy Spirit has always been present in the lives of the Old and New Testament saints. He ministered to Jesus and through Jesus. Today He lives inside every true believer in Jesus Christ. He empowers us to live the Christian life. He is not a force but a divine person who loves us (Rom. 15:30), teaches us (1 Cor. 2:13-14), and empowers us (Eph. 3:16). The Holy Spirit is our Helper. He is active in our world, bringing men and women to Jesus

Christ. He then is active in changing our lives to become more like Jesus Christ, to be holy like God is holy (1 Pet. 1:16).

Things To Ponder

1. Christian men and women sometimes doubt they really do belong to Jesus when they look at the sin in their lives and see the ugliness of their lives. How doe 1 Corinthians 12:3 and John 16:8-10 helps us know if we are Christian?

2. How can a person know his/her are a Christian, according to Romans 8:15-16 and Gal. 4:6; 5:22-23?

3. How can you disappoint the Holy Spirit according to Eph. 4:29-32? Also read verses 17-28.

4. What is the will of God for your life when it comes to the Holy Spirit according to Eph. 5:17-18?

5. How do you know the Holy Spirit is not just an abstract power or force (Romans 15:30)?

6. How did the Holy Spirit help Jesus perform His ministry according to Matt. 1:18; Luke 3:22; Luke 4:1, 14, 18; Luke 5:17; Luke 10:21; Acts 2:22; Acts 10:38; Heb. 9:14; and 1 Pet. 3:18?

7. Does God want you to be filled or empowered with the Holy Spirit?

The Holy Spirit

Answer true (T) or false (F) to each of the following statements:

1. The Holy Spirit was a man. _____
2. The Holy Spirit is God. _____
3. The Holy Spirit tells our hearts that we are Christians. _____
4. The Holy Spirit convicts us of sin and helps us understand who Jesus is. _____
5. The Holy Spirit is the Spirit of Truth. _____
6. God desires the Holy Spirit to control your life. _____
7. The Holy Spirit helps us pray. _____
8. The Holy Spirit is disappointed with us when we sin. _____
9. The Holy Spirit obeys both the Father and the Son of God. _____
10. We should be filled with the Spirit all of the time. _____