

Who Is God the Spirit?

The departure of Jesus from the earth brought His disciples great sadness and worry. But Jesus told them:

John 14:1

Let not your heart be troubled: ye believe in God, believe also in me.

Of the many words of encouragement Jesus gave to His disciples in John 14-16 (known as 'The Upper Room Discourse'), the coming of the Holy Spirit is central.

In John 14:18, He said,

John 14:18 KJV 1900

¹⁸ I will not leave you comfortless: I will come to you.

The departure of Christ made them feel abandoned, but Jesus had no intention of leaving them without His presence.

He was going to come to them, not just through the resurrection and His second coming, but also through the Holy Spirit.

This truth was meant to strengthen Jesus' disciples and it will strengthen us as well.

In this study, we will look at who the Spirit is, how the Spirit came and what His role is as 1) Divine Helper, 2) Teacher, 3) Power to Witness, 4) Convincer of the World, 5) Guide, and 6) Glorifier of Christ.

KEY VERSE: Acts 1:8 *'But ye shall receive power, after that the Holy Ghost is come upon you: and ye shall be witnesses unto me both in Jerusalem, and in all Judaea, and in Samaria, and unto the uttermost part of the earth.'* — Acts 1:8

BOOKS TO MEMORISE: Genesis, Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers, Deuteronomy, Joshua, Judges, Ruth, 1 & 2 Samuel, 1 & 2 Kings, 1 & 2 Chronicles, Ezra, Nehemiah, Esther, Job, Psalms, Proverbs, Ecclesiastes, Songs of Solomon, Isaiah, **Jeremiah, Lamentations, Ezekiel, Daniel, Hosea**

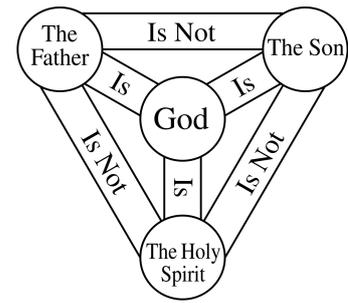
CHAPTERS TO READ THIS WEEK: Genesis 8-14

WHO IS THE SPIRIT?

1. HE IS GOD.

The Holy Spirit is the 'Third Person' of the Trinity.

2. HE IS EQUAL WITH THE FATHER AND THE SON IN EVERY WAY.



He was there at Creation.

Genesis 1:2

And the earth was without form, and void; and darkness was upon the face of the deep. And the Spirit of God moved upon the face of the waters.

He was directly involved in creating the world and in bringing every human being into existence.

Job 33:4

The Spirit of God hath made me, And the breath of the Almighty hath given me life.

He possesses all the attributes of God:

Present everywhere (Psalm 138:7-8)

All-knowing (Isaiah 40:13)

All-powerful (Zechariah 4:6)

Eternal (Hebrews 9:14)

Holy (Romans 1:4)

He is given titles that belong only to God:

'God'

Acts 5:3-4

³ But Peter said, Ananias, why hath Satan filled thine heart to lie to the Holy Ghost, and to keep back part of the price of the land? ⁴ Whiles it remained, was it not thine own? and after it was sold, was it not in thine own power? why hast thou conceived this thing in thine heart? thou hast not lied unto men, but unto God.

'Lord'

2 Corinthians 3:17

Now the Lord is that Spirit: and where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is liberty.

Also called:

'the Spirit of God' (1 Cor 2:11)

'the Spirit of the LORD' (Judges 3:10)

'the Spirit of Christ' (Rom 8:9)

'the Spirit of Jesus' (Acts 16:7).

3. JUST AS GOD THE FATHER AND GOD THE SON ARE *PERSONAL* SPIRITS SO THE HOLY SPIRIT IS A ‘PERSON’ OR HAS PERSONALITY.

This does not mean that He has a physical body like a man. But it does mean that He is more than just an energy or a force. He possesses all the qualities of personality - intellect, sensibility (emotion/feeling), and will.

This is demonstrated in so many ways in the Bible that it should almost go without saying.

Personal pronouns such as “He” and “Him” are often used.

We read about Him doing very personal actions:

Interceding (Rom 8:26)

Testifying (John 15:26)

Appointing (Acts 20:28)

Guiding (John 16:13)

Teaching (John 14:26)

We also find the Spirit reacting:

Grieved (Eph 4:30)

Blasphemed (Mark 3:29)

Resisted (Acts 7:51)

Tempted and tested (Acts 5:9)

HOW DID THE SPIRIT COME?

As ‘the eternal Spirit’, the Holy Spirit has always existed and has always been at work.

But, just as Jesus promised, the Spirit’s way of working in the lives of men underwent a dramatic change after the ascension of Jesus back to heaven.

This change happened in Acts 2 during a Jewish feast called ‘Pentecost’. So we need to understand the Spirit’s relationship with men before Pentecost, at Pentecost and after Pentecost.

1. BEFORE PENTECOST

All through the Old Testament, we find the Holy Spirit coming upon men to do a particular work. Here are some examples:

The Spirit came on **Samson** to help him deliver the Israelites from their enemies.

Judges 13:24–25

²⁴ And the woman bare a son, and called his name Samson: and the child grew, and the Lord blessed him. ²⁵ And the Spirit of the Lord began to move him at times in the camp of Dan between Zorah and Eshtaol.

The Spirit came on **David** to equip him to be the new king.

1 Samuel 16:13

Then Samuel took the horn of oil, and anointed him in the midst of his brethren: and the Spirit of the Lord came upon David from that day forward. So Samuel rose up, and went to Ramah.

Before the ascension of Christ, the Spirit of God was not given to everyone (including believers).

Also, having the Spirit come did not necessarily mean that the Spirit would stay.

Through sin, **Saul** caused the Spirit of the Lord to leave.

1 Samuel 16:14

But the Spirit of the Lord departed from Saul, and an evil spirit from the Lord troubled him.

David asked that the Spirit not leave him as a result of his sin.

Psalm 51:11

Cast me not away from thy presence; And take not thy holy spirit from me.

2. AT PENTECOST

With the coming of Christ, a new arrangement came into being.

The prophets had foretold that one day the Spirit of God would be poured out on all flesh.

Acts 2:17

And it shall come to pass in the last days, saith God, I will pour out of my Spirit upon all flesh: and your sons and your daughters shall prophesy, and your young men shall see visions, and your old men shall dream dreams:

Jesus promised that after He left the Spirit would come.

On the day of Pentecost, fifty days after the crucifixion of Christ, the Spirit came the world has never been the same!

Acts 2:1-4

¹ And when the day of Pentecost was fully come, they were all with one accord in one place. ² And suddenly there came a sound from heaven as of a rushing mighty wind, and it filled all the house where they were sitting. ³ And there appeared unto them cloven tongues like as of fire, and it sat upon each of them. ⁴ And they were all filled with the Holy Ghost, and began to speak with other tongues, as the Spirit gave them utterance.

3. AFTER PENTECOST

The Holy Spirit now comes on every believer at the moment of salvation, indwelling them, teaching them, guiding them, and empowering them.

1 Corinthians 12:13

For by one Spirit are we all baptized into one body, whether we be Jews or Gentiles, whether we be bond or free; and have been all made to drink into one Spirit.

WHAT IS THE ROLE OF THE SPIRIT?

John 16:5-7

5 But now I go my way to him that sent me; and none of you asketh me, Whither goest thou? 6 But because I have said these things unto you, sorrow hath filled your heart. 7 Nevertheless I tell you the truth; It is expedient for you that I go away: for if I go not away, the Comforter will not come unto you; but if I depart, I will send him unto you.

As Jesus prepared to return to the Father, His disciples were upset.

But Jesus told them that it was ‘expedient’ (more advantageous, profitable) for them that He leave. The departure of Jesus meant that the Comforter, the Holy Spirit, would be sent.

The Spirit came to do many things including:

Birthing all who believe on Jesus into the family of God.

John 3:5-7

5 Jesus answered, Verily, verily, I say unto thee, Except a man be born of water and of the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God. 6 That which is born of the flesh is flesh; and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit. 7 Marvel not that I said unto thee, Ye must be born again.

Assisting and equipping all who believe on Christ to do the will of God.

What a good God to not only give His Son but then to also give His Spirit!

1. THE HOLY SPIRIT IS A DIVINE HELPER.

After telling His disciples that He is going away (John 13:33), Jesus gives His disciples some incredibly encouraging news:

John 14:16-17

16 And I will pray the Father, and he shall give you another Comforter, that he may abide with you for ever; 17 Even the Spirit of truth; whom the world cannot receive, because it seeth him not, neither knoweth him: but ye know him; for he dwelleth with you, and shall be in you.

Comforter = a helper, advisor, intercessor, counsellor, or advocate

The Comforter (the Holy Spirit) will be of the same sort/nature (‘another’) as Jesus.

The Comforter will be with His disciples forever.

The Comforter is the Spirit of truth.

Those who reject Jesus - the way, the truth, and the life (John 14:6) - will not receive this Spirit.

The who receive Jesus will receive the Spirit of Truth and know the Spirit of Truth.

The Comforter will dwell with Jesus’ disciples and be in them.

Summary: The Holy Spirit is another Comforter like God the Son sent by God the Father to permanently indwell and assist every believer.

2. THE HOLY SPIRIT IS A TEACHER.

John 14:25–27

²⁵ These things have I spoken unto you, being yet present with you. ²⁶ 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. ²⁷ Peace I leave with you, my peace I give unto you: not as the world giveth, give I unto you. Let not your heart be troubled, neither let it be afraid.

Jesus was not abandoning them; He promised to return (John 14:18).

Jesus had taught them some things, but there are other things which the Holy Spirit would teach.

The Holy Spirit came to teach all things and to bring to remembrance what Jesus said.

For the disciples, this meant that after Jesus left and the Spirit came, lots more things would make sense to them.

John 12:16

These things understood not his disciples at the first: but when Jesus was glorified, then remembered they that these things were written of him, and that they had done these things unto him.

The Holy Spirit enabled them to write down the things that happened and the meaning behind them in the gospel records and the other New Testament books.

For us, this means that the Holy Spirit enables us to understand the things that are written in the Bible.

1 Corinthians 2:9–12

⁹ But as it is written, Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man, the things which God hath prepared for them that love him. ¹⁰ But God hath revealed them unto us by his Spirit: for the Spirit searcheth all things, yea, the deep things of God. ¹¹ For what man knoweth the things of a man, save the spirit of man which is in him? even so the things of God knoweth no man, but the Spirit of God. ¹² Now we have received, not the spirit of the world, but the spirit which is of God; that we might know the things that are freely given to us of God.

This was written to bring them peace. There was no need to be afraid or troubled.

God has given us a teacher. We don't need to remain afraid, troubled, or confused. We can open the Bible and let Him teach us and comfort us and give us peace.

Summary: The Holy Spirit teaches believers all things and reminds them of all things God has said in His Word.

3. THE HOLY SPIRIT GIVES POWER TO WITNESS.

John 15:26–27

²⁶ But when the Comforter is come, whom I will send unto you from the Father, even the Spirit of truth, which proceedeth from the Father, he shall testify of me: ²⁷ And ye also shall bear witness, because ye have been with me from the beginning.

The Comforter (The Holy Spirit) is sent by the Father and by the Son.

Again He is called the Spirit of truth which proceeds from the Father.

He is the Spirit of truth because He testifies that Jesus is ‘the way, the truth, and the life’.

The main message the Holy Spirit wants to get out is who Jesus is.

There is no truth apart from Jesus.

One big way that the Holy Spirit testifies about Jesus is by helping and empowering those who have believed on Christ and know Christ to bear witness to who Christ is.

This is what was promised in:

Acts 1:8

But ye shall receive power, after that the Holy Ghost is come upon you: and ye shall be witnesses unto me both in Jerusalem, and in all Judaea, and in Samaria, and unto the uttermost part of the earth.

And that is what happened:

Acts 4:33

And with great power gave the apostles witness of the resurrection of the Lord Jesus: and great grace was upon them all.

Summary: The Holy Spirit testifies to the truth about Jesus and empowers us to testify about Jesus.

4. THE HOLY SPIRIT CONVICTS.

John 16:8–11

⁸ And when he is come, he will reprove the world of sin, and of righteousness, and of judgment: ⁹ Of sin, because they believe not on me; ¹⁰ Of righteousness, because I go to my Father, and ye see me no more; ¹¹ Of judgment, because the prince of this world is judged.

The Spirit of God works to “reprove” (convince, convict) the world:

Of sin (v.9) - The Spirit works to show men that the greatest sin is to reject Jesus Christ.

John 3:18

He that believeth on him is not condemned: but he that believeth not is condemned already, because he hath not believed in the name of the only begotten Son of God.

Of righteousness (v.10) - The Spirit shows men that Jesus was truly righteous because He was resurrected and went to His Father.

Of judgment (v.11) - Through His death and resurrection, Christ judged and condemned Satan and the Spirit tries to convince men that one day they will face judgement if they don't believe on Jesus

What this means for believers:

We don't have to try to convince men or convict men - that is the job of the Holy Spirit.

We simply preach the message of the coming and cross of Christ, and He will convict them.

Acts 2:36-37

36 Therefore let all the house of Israel know assuredly, that God hath made that same Jesus, whom ye have crucified, both Lord and Christ. 37 Now when they heard this, they were pricked in their heart, and said unto Peter and to the rest of the apostles, Men and brethren, what shall we do?

They may not all believe, but the Holy Spirit will show them. Some will believe when they hear and others will become angry because they know they are wrong but don't want to repent.

Acts 7:54

When they heard these things, they were cut to the heart, and they gnashed on him with their teeth.

We should do our job of preaching and trust the Holy Spirit to do His!

Summary: The Holy Spirit works to convict the whole world of their sin and to convince them of their need to believe on Jesus.

5. THE HOLY SPIRIT IS A GUIDE.

John 16:12-13

12 I have yet many things to say unto you, but ye cannot bear them now. 13 Howbeit when he, the Spirit of truth, is come, he will guide you into all truth: for he shall not speak of himself; but whatsoever he shall hear, that shall he speak: and he will shew you things to come.

Jesus had more things He wanted to say to His disciples, but they were not able to bear them at that time.

The Holy Spirit, the Spirit of truth, who uses the Word of God, was going to come and guide them into all truth.

The Word of God's grace, taught by the Spirit is able to build us up and is all that we need.

Acts 20:32

And now, brethren, I commend you to God, and to the word of his grace, which is able to build you up, and to give you an inheritance among all them which are sanctified.

The main focus of the Holy Spirit is not to speak of Himself but to speak what He hears from the Father and to show things to come.

Summary: The Holy Spirit teaches believers all the truth they need to know about Jesus.

6. THE HOLY SPIRIT GLORIFIES JESUS.

John 16:14

He shall glorify me: for he shall receive of mine, and shall shew it unto you.

The main focus of the Holy Spirit is to glorify Jesus.

He knows all about Jesus and will show others all about Him.

The entire ministry of the Holy Spirit is to put the spotlight not on Himself but on Jesus Christ.

Spirit-filled people and Spirit-filled churches are going to make much of Jesus, talk about Him all the time, glorify Him, and proclaim His message around the world

1 John 4:1-2

¹ Beloved, believe not every spirit, but try the spirits whether they are of God: because many false prophets are gone out into the world. ² Hereby know ye the Spirit of God: Every spirit that confesseth that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh is of God:

Summary: The focus of the Holy Spirit is to glorify Jesus and spirit-filled believers will glorify Jesus as well.

QUESTIONS FOR REFLECTION

Have you ever been convicted of:

your sin and unbelief;

the righteousness of Christ as seen in His death, burial, and resurrection;

the fact that you will stand before God to be judged one day?

Have you come to understand who Jesus is?

Have you believed on Jesus Christ and been born again into God's family?

If you have believed on Jesus, then are you taking comfort from the presence of God the Holy Spirit in your life every day, helping you, teaching you through the Word of God, empowering you to share the gospel, and guiding you into all truth?