

Do You Know the Holy Spirit?

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Do you *really* know the Holy Spirit? As much as the Bible talks about the Holy Spirit, it is a wonder then why so little thought or consideration is given to Him. In our understanding of who God is, we must not forget about the Holy Spirit.

Unfortunately, many people do not think of the Holy Spirit as a Person and therefore their disrespect of Him shows. Many talk about the Holy Spirit as if He equaled a powerful emotion to be experienced. Many define Him as some kind of unexplainable, mysterious energy force of the cosmos. They will speak of Him as an influence or a power of God, but rarely if ever as a Person, one of the three persons that comprise Deity.

The apostle Paul by the Spirit said to his Corinthian brethren: “*The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, and the love of God, and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit, be with you all.*” (2 Cor. 13:14, NASB) We should know the Holy Spirit with whom we have fellowship! Taking the time to study the Scriptures will clear up any misunderstandings we have and enrich the relationship we are meant to have with the Holy Spirit as Christians.

The Holy Spirit is Holy!

The word spirit in the New Testament comes from the Greek word PNEUMA. There are several different uses of the word in Scripture (e.g., wind – Jn 3:8; breath – 2 Thes 2:8; unclean spirits – Mt 10:1). What sets the Holy Spirit apart is that He is **holy!** (Jn 14:26)

The Holy Spirit is *holy* (from HAGIOS). This means that He is worthy to be revered as an object of awe or veneration, He is set apart and sacred, and that He is pure and sinless (cf. Thayer’s Greek Lexicon). Holiness is one of the characteristics of God. To be designated as holy, identifies the Spirit with God Himself! “*And one called out to another and said, ‘Holy, Holy, Holy, is the LORD of hosts, the whole earth is full of His glory.’*” (Isa. 6:3; cf. Ps. 103:1; 111:9; Isa. 57:15; Mat. 6:9b; Rev. 4:8)

The Holy Spirit Has a Spiritual Nature.

Being a Spirit, He is spiritual, not physical. To rightly understand the Holy Spirit, we must view Him differently than a physical man, for He is a *Spirit* as God is (John 14:26; cf. 4:24). His existence is **not** verified by the physical or our emotions! Since the Holy Spirit is a spirit or spiritual, He cannot be perceived by our physical senses (i.e., sight, hearing, smell, touch, taste). The raised Jesus said to His apostles: “*See My hands and My feet, that it is I Myself; touch Me and see, for a spirit does not have flesh and bones as you see that I have.*” (Luke 24:39). The Holy Spirit exists in an invisible realm, a non-physical world (cf. Eph. 6:12).

Beware of Human Reasoning in Religion That Defines the Holy Spirit in Physical, Fleshly, or Earthly Ways. Many mistakenly base the Holy Spirit’s presence on their

emotions: “It feels so right, it must be the Spirit.” Sadly, many validate sinful behaviors this way! Similarly, others determine that the Holy Spirit is communicating to them by the physical sensations they experience (e.g., energetic, shaky, tingling, dizzy, calm, hot/cold, restless, tense, burning, feeling light or heavy, pain, shiver, etc.). This is far too subjective – How is a person to know this is from the Spirit or from a meal they ate!?! Others claim to receive visions from the Spirit, yet once again such experiences stem from the physical such as drug or alcohol use, sleep deprivation, or an intense emotion. Sadly, there are televangelists today that will preach about “supernatural success” defining the Spirit’s presence in your life by your success in a career or economic fortune. Finally, there are those who fraudulently make claims of miraculous healings that are unverifiable, lacking in supporting evidence.

Like Ancient Times, Many Religious Groups Today Attempt to Bring the Holy Spirit (a Spiritual Being) Down to the Level of Physical Man! For example, many today claim to have the miraculous gift of speaking in tongues. Yet, not a one of these speak from the Holy Spirit. These occurrences are nothing more than ecstatic utterances – unintelligible speech that is caused by overpowering emotions such as joy, fear, or anger, not by the Holy Spirit. Instead of speaking *actual* languages fluently without study (**cf. Acts 2:4-11**), the claim of speaking in tongues is eerily similar to the ancient practices of the pagans. Just like the pagans, people suppose that by making a lot of noise through their babblings they can get the attention of God!

Another example of this is the people’s request for a “Spirit-filled” worship service. Often, what they *really* want is not a worship that follows the Holy Spirit inspired Scriptures, but a worship that physically heightens the senses and makes them “feel good.” Thus, many religious groups are more than willing to accommodate if it will bring in the numbers. By majoring in the psychology of “sensation and perception,” modern day worship services aim to stimulate the emotions through physical means (e.g., music, chanting, incense, candles, drama plays, dancing, the powers of human persuasion, etc.).

All we know *with certainty* about the Holy Spirit comes from the Scriptures (**2 Tim. 3:16-17; Rom. 10:17**), not from our traditions, superstitions, feelings, or by physical measurements. If we truly want to know the Holy Spirit, we need to learn from His word.

The Holy Spirit is a Person with Whom We Can Have a Relationship.

The Holy Spirit Possess the Qualities and Attributes of a Person. Every person has life, thoughts, character, the ability to choose and take action, etc. and that is exactly what the Holy Spirit has! For example, the Holy Spirit has a mind (**Rom. 8:27**), knowledge (**1 Cor. 2:11; 14:11**), a will (**1 Cor. 12:11; Acts 16:6-7; 21:11-14**), goodness (**Neh. 9:20; Ps. 143:10**), and the power to love and comfort others (**Rom. 15:30; 5:5; Phil. 2:1**) (**John 14:16-17; Acts 9:31**).

The Holy Spirit Performed Good Works That Demonstrated That He is a Person. The Holy Spirit speaks (e.g., **Acts 8:29; 10:19-20; 13:2; 1 Tim. 4:1**). He testifies or

bears witness (**John 15:26; Acts 20:23; Rom. 8:16**). He also teaches, guides, and leads or directs (**John 14:26; 16:13; Acts 16:6-7; Rom. 8:14**).

The Holy Spirit has emotions as a person would and can be offended. The Holy Spirit can be grieved or saddened (**Eph. 4:30; Isa. 63:10**). The Holy Spirit can be resisted or opposed (**Acts 7:51**). He can also be insulted (**Heb. 10:29**), even blasphemed (**Mat. 12:31**).

How then should we speak of the Holy Spirit? Clearly, He is **not** an “it,” a feeling, thing, impersonal force, or a mere divine influence. Nor is the Holy Spirit just a manifestation of God the Father or the word of God. The Holy Spirit is a **Person** and thus we should always speak of Him as a person. “*But the Helper, the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in My name, He will teach you all things, and bring to your remembrance all that I said to you*” (**John 14:26; cf. John 15:26; 16:13-14; cf. Rom. 8:16**).

The Holy Spirit: One of Three of the Divine Nature (Deity).

The Holy Spirit is God! “*But Peter said, ‘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.’*” (**Acts 5:3-4**) He is Eternal (**Heb. 9:14**), all-knowing (**1 Cor. 2:11**), all-powerful (**Job 33:4**), and present in all places at the same time (**Ps. 139:7ff**).

The Holy Spirit is not God by Himself, but One of Three Persons That Comprise the One True God (the Godhead or Divine Nature - **Acts 17:29; Rom 1:20; Col 2:9**). God has a *unified or compound oneness* to His nature. The Hebrew word ECHAD is often translated “one” to denote a **unified oneness** (**Deut 6:4; cf. Gen. 2:24**). We also find *plural* nouns and verbs to refer to God; the most common one is the Hebrew word ELOHIYM (**Gen. 1:1; cf. Josh. 24:16**). God at times spoke in the first person *plural* (**Gen 1:26; 3:22; 11:7**). While all three Persons comprise who God is, each is *distinguishable* from the other, *coexisting simultaneously*. “*And after being baptized, Jesus went up immediately from the water; and behold, the heavens were opened, and he saw the Spirit of God descending as a dove, and coming upon Him, and behold, a voice out of the heavens, saying, ‘This is My beloved Son, in whom I am well-pleased.’*” (**Mat 3:16-17; cf. Mat. 28:19; Rom. 15:30**). Each person is equally God, yet each is of a different rank by the Divine order. The Father has first rank, then the Son, and then the Holy Spirit (**John 16:13-15**), yet each are *equally* God (**Jn 6:27; Col. 2:9; Acts 5:3-4**).

There Are Many Names of the Holy Spirit

There are many names of the Holy Spirit found in the Scriptures such as: The Spirit of God (This emphasizes His divine nature) (**Rom. 8:9, 14; Phil. 3:3**) or the Spirit of Christ (He comes from the Father through the Son) (**Rom. 8:9**). Therefore, a complete study of the Holy Spirit will require our consideration of every passage where the Spirit is found: *There are over seventeen different names of the Holy Spirit!* (e.g., **Isa 11:2; 61:1; Mat**

3:16; 10:20; Jn 3:5; 14:17, 26; 16:13; Rom 8:2, 15; 1 Cor 6:11; 2 Cor 3:3; Eph 1:13; 4:30; Heb 10:29; 1 Jn 4:13; Rev 1:4; etc.).

Clearly, Knowing Who the Holy Spirit is, is Essential to Living Life as a Christian!
“For all who are being led by the Spirit of God, these are sons of God.” (Rom. 8:14). Do you know the Holy Spirit?