

Do You Know the Holy Spirit? Lesson One: The Nature of the Holy Spirit

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Introduction: Do You Really Know the Holy Spirit?

- A. For some Christians, the Holy Spirit is the forgotten Person of the Godhead; barely much thought or consideration is given to Him in daily living for the Lord.
- B. For many others, the Holy Spirit is misunderstood, treated not as a Person, but as a feeling, a mysterious cosmic energy force, or an influence or power of God.
- C. We should know the Holy Spirit with whom we have fellowship!

2 Corinthians 13:14 (NASB) *The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, and the love of God, and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit, be with you all.*

I. The Holy Spirit is Holy!

- A. No ordinary “PNEUMA”! (The Greek word translated “spirit” is PNEUMA).
 - 1. There are many uses of the word, at least eight different meanings! (e.g., wind – **John 3:8**; breath – **2 Thes. 2:8**; unclean spirits – **Mat 10:1**).
 - 2. What sets the Holy Spirit (PNEUMA) apart is that He is **holy**!
- B. The holiness of the Holy Spirit (**John 14:26**).
 - 1. The Holy Spirit is *holy* (from HAGIOS) and thus worthy to be revered; an object of awe or veneration, set apart, sacred (cf. Thayer’s Greek Lexicon).
 - 2. Holiness is one of the characteristics of God.
 - a. To be designated as holy, identifies the Spirit with God Himself! (e.g., **Ps. 103:1; 111:9; Isa. 6:3; 57:15; Mat. 6:9b; Rev. 4:8**)

II. The Holy Spirit Has a Spiritual Nature.

- A. Being a Spirit, He is spiritual, not physical.
 - 1. 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**).
- B. His existence is **not** verified by the physical or our emotions!
 - 1. Since the Holy Spirit is a Spirit or spiritual, He cannot be perceived by our physical senses (sight, hearing, smell, touch, taste) (**Luke 24:39**).
 - 2. He exists in an invisible realm, a **non**-physical world (cf. **Eph. 6:12**).
 - 3. Beware of human reasoning in religion that defines the Holy Spirit in physical, fleshly, or earthly ways!
 - a. Emotional experiences (“It feels so right, it must be the Spirit.”).
 - b. Physical sensations: e.g., energetic, shaky, tingling, dizzy, calm, hot/cold, restless, tense, burning, feeling light or heavy, pain, shiver, etc.
 - c. Visions- Caused by drugs/alcohol, sleep deprivation, intense emotion.
 - d. Success in career or economic fortune (“Supernatural success”).
 - e. Fraudulent and unverifiable claims of miraculous healings.
 - 4. Like ancient pagan practices, many religious groups today attempt to bring the Holy Spirit (a spiritual being) down to the level of physical man!

Example: Modern “tongue speaking” is nothing more than *ecstatic* utterances (speech caused by overpowering emotions such as joy, fear, or anger); it is **not** the voice of God!

Example: 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.).

- C. 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, or feelings.

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

A. The Holy Spirit possess the qualities and attributes of a person.

1. Every person has life, thoughts, character, the ability to choose and take action, etc. and that is exactly what the Holy Spirit has!

Examples: 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**), the power to love and comfort others (**Rom. 15:30; 5:5; Phil. 2:1**) (**John 14:16-17; Acts 9:31**), etc.

B. The Holy Spirit performed good works that demonstrated that He is a person.

1. The Holy Spirit speaks (e.g., **Acts 8:29; 10:19-20; 13:2; 1 Tim. 4:1**).
2. He testifies or bears witness (**John 15:26; Acts 20:23; Rom. 8:16**).
3. He also teaches, guides, and leads or directs (**John 14:26; 16:13; Acts 16:6-7; Rom. 8:14**).

C. The Holy Spirit has emotions as a person would and can be offended.

1. The Holy Spirit can be grieved or saddened (**Eph. 4:30; Isa. 63:10**).
2. The Holy Spirit can be resisted or opposed (**Acts 7:51**).
3. He can also be insulted (**Heb. 10:29**), even blasphemed (**Mat. 12:31**).

D. Therefore, how should we speak of the Holy Spirit?

1. He is *not* an “it,” a feeling, thing, impersonal force, influence, etc.
2. He is *not* a manifestation of God the Father *nor* is He the word of God.
3. The Holy Spirit is a *person* and thus we should always speak of Him as a *person* (**John 14:26; 15:26; 16:13-14; cf. Rom. 8:16**).

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

A. The Holy Spirit is God! (**Acts 5:3-4; cf. John 20:28**).

1. 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**).

B. The Holy Spirit is not God *by Himself*, but one of three persons that comprise the one true God (the Godhead or Divine Nature - **Ac 17:29; Rom 1:20; Col 2:9**).

1. God has a *unified or compound oneness* to His nature.
 - a. The Hebrew word ECHAD is often translated “one” to denote a unified oneness (**Deut 6:4; cf. Gen. 2:24**).
2. 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**).
3. God at times spoke in the first person *plural* (**Gen 1:26; 3:22; 11:7**).
4. While all three Persons comprise who God is, each is *distinguishable* from the other, *coexisting simultaneously* (**Mt 3:16-17; 28:19; Rm 15:30**).

C. Each person is equally God, yet each is of a different rank by the Divine order.

1. The Father has first rank, then the Son, and then the Holy Spirit (**John 16:13-15**), yet each are *equally* God (**John 6:27; Col. 2:9; Acts 5:3-4**).

V. There Are Many Names of the Holy Spirit (“Holy Ghost”/ Guest – KJV).

A. The Spirit of God (Emphasizes His divine nature) (**Rom. 8:9, 14; Phil. 3:3**).

B. The Spirit of Christ (He comes from the Father through the Son) (**Rom. 8:9**).

C. 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.**)

Conclusion: Knowing Who the Holy Spirit Truly is, is Essential to Living Life as a Christian! (**Rom. 8:14; 1 Cor. 6:19; Gal. 5:25**).