

## Who is the Holy Spirit?

In the course of my theological studies I recently had to come up with a questionnaire regarding the Holy Spirit and interview people from different church traditions/backgrounds. This was to provide me with a small snapshot in of the varied beliefs in the body of Christ regarding the Holy Spirit. I will use 2 or 3 sermons to teach around the Holy Spirit and help us to understand a little more who He is.

### 1. The Holy Spirit is God

#### **a. He is uncreated**

*“In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth. The earth was without form, and void; and darkness was on the face of the deep. And the Spirit of God was hovering over the face of the waters.” (Gen 1:1-2, NKJV)*

He was with God in the beginning before creation began.

#### **b. He is eternal**

*“For if the blood of bulls and goats and the ashes of a heifer, sprinkling the unclean, sanctifies for the purifying of the flesh, how much more shall the blood of Christ, who through the eternal Spirit offered Himself without spot to God, cleanse your conscience from dead works to serve the living God?” (Heb 9:13-14, NKJV)*

If He is uncreated, then He must be eternal. If He is eternal then He must be God.

#### **c. He is Holy**

There are many kinds of beings in the spirit world that are not holy (seducing spirits, unclean spirits, lying spirits, evil spirits and so forth). The Spirit of God is characterized by the same quality seen by Isaiah when he declared, “Holy, holy, holy is the Lord of hosts” (Is. 6:3).

*“And so I will show my greatness and my holiness, and I will make myself known in the sight of many nations. Then they will know that I am the LORD.” (Eze 38:23, NIV)*

*“Do not cast me from your presence or take your Holy Spirit from me.” (Psa 51:11, NIV)*

*“For thus says the High and Lofty One Who inhabits eternity, whose name is Holy: “I dwell in the high and holy place, With him who has a contrite and humble spirit, To revive the spirit of the humble, And to revive the heart of the contrite ones.” (Isa 57:15, NKJV)*

**d. He is omnipresent**

He is present everywhere.

*“Where can I go from Your Spirit? Or where can I flee from Your presence? If I ascend into heaven, You are there; If I make my bed in hell, behold, You are there. If I take the wings of the morning, And dwell in the uttermost parts of the sea, Even there Your hand shall lead me, And Your right hand shall hold me.” (Psa 139:7-10, NKJV)*

**e. He is omniscient**

The Holy Spirit is all-knowing.

*“But God has revealed them to us through His Spirit. For the Spirit searches all things, yes, the deep things of God. For what man knows the things of a man except the spirit of the man which is in him? Even so no one knows the things of God except the Spirit of God.” (1Co 2:10-11, NKJV)*

*“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 things that I said to you.” (Joh 14:26, NKJV)*

*“For if our heart condemns us, God is greater than our heart, and knows all things.” (1Jn 3:20, NKJV)*

*“Great is our Lord, and mighty in power; His understanding is infinite.” (Psa 147:5, NKJV)*

***f. He is omnipotent***

The Holy Spirit is all-powerful.

*“And the angel answered and said to her, “The Holy Spirit will come upon you, and the power of the Highest will overshadow you; therefore, also, that Holy One who is to be born will be called the Son of God.” (Luk 1:35, NKJV)*

He is known as the “finger of God”.

The Bible uses anthropomorphisms to help us as finite human beings to understand an infinite God. These anthropomorphisms are human physical attributes ascribed to God which are not literal attributes He has, but are used to assist us to grasp what is being communicated. One of these anthropomorphisms is used in describing the Holy Spirit as the “finger of God”.

How do we use our fingers? Our fingers do the actual touching and working, in most of what we do. The Holy Spirit is the finger or fingers of God so to speak.

*In casting out demons*

*“But if I cast out demons with the finger of God, surely the kingdom of God has come upon you.” (Luk 11:20, NKJV)*

*“But if I cast out demons by the Spirit of God, surely the kingdom of God has come upon you.” (Mat 12:28, NKJV)*

*In creation:*

*“When I consider Your heavens, the work of Your fingers, The moon and the stars, which You have ordained, What is man that You are mindful of him, And the son of man that You visit him?” (Psa 8:3-4, NKJV)*

*“In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth. The earth was without form, and void; and darkness was on the face of the deep. And the Spirit of God was hovering over the face of the waters.” (Gen 1:1-2, NKJV)*

*In Israel’s deliverance:*

*“Now the magicians so worked with their enchantments to bring forth lice, but they could not. So there were lice on man and beast. Then the magicians said to*

*Pharaoh, "This is the finger of God." But Pharaoh's heart grew hard, and he did not heed them, just as the LORD had said." (Exo 8:18-19, NKJV)*

*In writing the tablets of the law*

*"And when He had made an end of speaking with him on Mount Sinai, He gave Moses two tablets of the Testimony, tablets of stone, written with the finger of God." (Exo 31:18, NKJV)*

*In Jesus writing in the dirt with his finger symbolising the convicting power of the Holy Spirit*

*"Then the scribes and Pharisees brought to Him a woman caught in adultery. And when they had set her in the midst, they said to Him, "Teacher, this woman was caught in adultery, in the very act. Now Moses, in the law, commanded us that such should be stoned. But what do You say?" This they said, testing Him, that they might have something of which to accuse Him. But Jesus stooped down and wrote on the ground with His finger, as though He did not hear. So when they continued asking Him, He raised Himself up and said to them, "He who is without sin among you, let him throw a stone at her first." And again He stooped down and wrote on the ground. Then those who heard it, being convicted by their conscience, went out one by one, beginning with the oldest even to the last. And Jesus was left alone, and the woman standing in the midst. When Jesus had raised Himself up and saw no one but the woman, He said to her, "Woman, where are those accusers of yours? Has no one condemned you?" She said, "No one, Lord." And Jesus said to her, "Neither do I condemn you; go and sin no more." (Joh 8:3-11, NKJV)*

*"Nevertheless I tell you the truth. It is to your advantage that I go away; for if I do not go away, the Helper will not come to you; but if I depart, I will send Him to you. And when He has come, He will convict the world of sin, and of righteousness, and of judgment: of sin, because they do not believe in Me; of righteousness, because I go to My Father and you see Me no more; of judgment, because the ruler of this world is judged." (Joh 16:7-11, NKJV)*

### ***g. Additional attributes of God***

Towards the end of last year, Ps Paul did a series entitled "The Attributes of God". We have seen that the Holy Spirit is God and so all these attributes apply to the Holy Spirit.

Some of these include:

#### *(i) He is Immutable*

*"For I am the LORD, I do not change; Therefore you are not consumed, O sons of Jacob." (Mal 3:6, NKJV)*

*"They will all disappear and wear out like clothes. You change them, as you would a coat, but you last forever. You are always the same. Years cannot change you." (Psa 102:26-27, CEV)*

#### *(ii) He is merciful*

*"Through the LORD's mercies we are not consumed, Because His compassions fail not. They are new every morning; Great is Your faithfulness." (Lam 3:22-23, NKJV)*

#### *(iii) He is loving*

*"Beloved, let us love one another, for love is of God; and everyone who loves is born of God and knows God. He who does not love does not know God, for God is love." (1Jn 4:7-8, NKJV)*

## **2. The Holy Spirit is part of the Trinity**

What are some of the representations of the trinity in the Scripture?

### ***a. In creation***

*"In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth. The earth was without form, and void; and darkness was on the face of the deep. And the Spirit of God was hovering over the face of the waters. Then God said, "Let there be light"; and there was light." (Gen 1:1-3, NKJV)*

*"Then God said, "Let Us make man in Our image, according to Our likeness; let them have dominion over the fish of the sea, over the birds of the air, and over the cattle,*

*over all the earth and over every creeping thing that creeps on the earth.” (Gen 1:26, NKJV)*

*“In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. He was in the beginning with God. All things were made through Him, and without Him nothing was made that was made.” (Joh 1:1-3, NKJV)*

*“For there are three that bear witness in heaven: the Father, the Word, and the Holy Spirit; and these three are one. And there are three that bear witness on earth: the Spirit, the water, and the blood; and these three agree as one.” (1Jn 5:7-8, NKJV)*

- The Father spoke.
- The Word went forth.
- The Spirit moved.

#### ***b. At the birth of Christ***

*(Mt. 1:20-21; Luke 1:31-35)*

*“But while he thought about these things, behold, an angel of the Lord appeared to him in a dream, saying, “Joseph, son of David, do not be afraid to take to you Mary your wife, for that which is conceived in her is of the Holy Spirit. And she will bring forth a Son, and you shall call His name JESUS, for He will save His people from their sins.” (Mat 1:20-21, NKJV)*

*“And behold, you will conceive in your womb and bring forth a Son, and shall call His name JESUS. He will be great, and will be called the Son of the Highest; and the Lord God will give Him the throne of His father David. And He will reign over the house of Jacob forever, and of His kingdom there will be no end.” Then Mary said to the angel, “How can this be, since I do not know a man?” And the angel answered and said to her, “The Holy Spirit will come upon you, and the power of the Highest will overshadow you; therefore, also, that Holy One who is to be born will be called the Son of God.” (Luk 1:31-35, NKJV)*

- The Father sent.
- The Son was incarnated.
- The Holy Spirit overshadowed Mary.

**c. At the baptism of Christ**

*“When all the people were baptized, it came to pass that Jesus also was baptized; and while He prayed, the heaven was opened. And the Holy Spirit descended in bodily form like a dove upon Him, and a voice came from heaven which said, “You are My beloved Son; in You I am well pleased.”” (Luk 3:21-22, NKJV)*

- The Father spoke from heaven.
- The Son was baptized in the Jordan.
- The Spirit descended upon Jesus.

**d. In Christ’s ministry**

*“how God anointed Jesus of Nazareth with the Holy Spirit and with power, who went about doing good and healing all who were oppressed by the devil, for God was with Him.” (Act 10:38, NKJV)*

- God anointed Jesus.
- Jesus was anointed.
- The Holy Spirit was the anointing.

**e. In the commissioning of the disciples**

*Therefore go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit... (Mt. 28:19)*

The disciples were to baptize in the name of the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit.

**f. At the exaltation of Christ**

*This Jesus God has raised up, of which we are all witnesses. Therefore being exalted to the right hand of God, and having received from the Father the promise of the Holy Spirit, He poured out this which you now see and hear. (Acts 2:32-33)*

- The Father fulfilled His promise to the exalted Son.
- Jesus, at the right hand of the Father, received the promise.
- The Holy Spirit is given by Jesus to the waiting disciples.

**g. At the receiving of the Gentiles**

*“For it is through Him that we both [whether far off or near] now have an introduction (access) by one [Holy] Spirit to the Father [so that we are able to approach Him].” (Eph 2:18, AMP)*

For through him we have access to the Father by one Spirit.

#### ***h. At the martyrdom of Stephen***

*But Stephen, full of the Holy Spirit, looked up to heaven and saw the glory of God, and Jesus standing at the right hand of God. “Look,” he said, “I see heaven open and the Son of Man standing at the right hand of God.” (Acts 7:55-56)*

- The Father is seen as the “glory of God.”
- The Son is the Son of Man standing at the right hand of God.
- Stephen is full of the Holy Spirit.

#### ***i. In His role in relation to the Church***

*“There are diversities of gifts, but the same Spirit. There are differences of ministries, but the same Lord. And there are diversities of activities, but it is the same God who works all in all. But the manifestation of the Spirit is given to each one for the profit of all: for to one is given the word of wisdom through the Spirit, to another the word of knowledge through the same Spirit, to another faith by the same Spirit, to another gifts of healings by the same Spirit, to another the working of miracles, to another prophecy, to another discerning of spirits, to another different kinds of tongues, to another the interpretation of tongues. But one and the same Spirit works all these things, distributing to each one individually as He wills.” (1Co 12:4-11, NKJV)*

*“But to each one of us grace was given according to the measure of Christ's gift. Therefore He says: “WHEN HE ASCENDED ON HIGH, HE LED CAPTIVITY CAPTIVE, AND GAVE GIFTS TO MEN.” (Now this, “HE ASCENDED”—what does it mean but that He also first descended into the lower parts of the earth? He who descended is also the One who ascended far above all the heavens, that He might fill all things.) And He Himself gave some to be apostles, some prophets, some evangelists, and some pastors and teachers, for the equipping of the saints for the work of ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ, till we all come to the unity of*

*the faith and of the knowledge of the Son of God, to a perfect man, to the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ;" (Eph 4:7-13, NKJV)*

- The Holy Spirit gives gifts.
- The Lord Jesus dispenses ministries
- God the Father provides the spiritual motivation and energy to activate the gifts and ministries.

***j. Other references in John:***

*John 14:16*

*And I will ask the Father, and he will give you another Counsellor to be with you forever—*

- The Son prays to the Father.
- The Father gives Holy Spirit (another Comforter/Counsellor).

*John 14:26*

*But the Counsellor, the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in my name, will teach you all things and will remind you of everything I have said to you.*

- The Father sends the Comforter.
- The Comforter is sent in the name of the Son.
- The Holy Spirit teaches.

*John 15:26*

*When the Counsellor comes, whom I will send to you from the Father, the Spirit of truth who goes out from the Father, he will testify about me.*

- The Father is the source from which the Comforter comes.
- The Son goes away and sends the Comforter.
- The Holy Spirit is the Comforter who testifies of the Son.

*John 16:7, 10*

*But I tell you the truth: It is for your good that I am going away. Unless I go away, the Counsellor will not come to you; but if I go, I will send him to you... 10 in regard to righteousness, because I am going to the Father, where you can see me no longer...*

- The Father is the One to whom the Son returns.
- The Son goes away and sends the Comforter.

*John 16:13-15*

*But when he, the Spirit of truth, comes, he will guide you into all truth. He will not speak on his own; he will speak only what he hears, and he will tell you what is yet to come. He will bring glory to me by taking from what is mine and making it known to you. All that belongs to the Father is mine. That is why I said the Spirit will take from what is mine and make it known to you.*

- The Father possesses all things and gives to the Son.
- The Son is glorified by the Spirit.

## **Conclusion**

We have started exploring the vast subject which is the Holy Spirit today. We have seen that the Holy Spirit was with God in the beginning before creation began. He is therefore uncreated and eternal and as such must be God. He is Holy. He is omnipresent, present everywhere. He is omniscient, all-knowing. He is omnipotent, all-powerful and is known as the “finger of God”. We have also seen that the Holy Spirit is part of the Trinity and is co-equal with God. He was active in the creation of the world and man. He was part of the process of the incarnation of Christ, baptism of Christ, ministry of Christ and resurrection of Christ. In relation to His work with the Church, we see that he gives gifts as He wills. He is a counsellor, a comforter, a teacher and the Spirit of truth. These are but a few of the points to consider regarding knowing the Holy Spirit. We will continue with this topic in 2 Sundays time.

## **Acknowledgements**

Bill Scheidler. Holy Spirit. Accessed from

[http://www.churchleadershipresources.com/Curriculum/Holy\\_Spirit/Notes/Holy\\_Spirit\\_Teacher\\_A4.pdf](http://www.churchleadershipresources.com/Curriculum/Holy_Spirit/Notes/Holy_Spirit_Teacher_A4.pdf) February 2022

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