

The Personality And Divinity Of The Holy Spirit

Intro. There is a great deal of confusion today relating to the Holy Spirit. Yet, the Bible has a great deal to say concerning Him. Possibly some of the problems come from the term Ghost and Spirit, some thinking that He thus cannot be understood and that He is something mysterious. Thus, we have great confusion over the Holy Spirit. Our study deals with the Holy Spirit and as we study Him we will correct many misunderstandings concerning Him.

I. SOME MISCONCEPTIONS.

A. Jehovah's Witnesses have taught that the Spirit is just a force or power.

1. "The Bible's use of 'holy spirit' indicates that it is a controlled force that Jehovah God uses to accomplish a variety of his purposes. To a certain extent, it can be likened to electricity, a force that can be adapted to perform a great variety of operation....No the holy spirit is not a person and it is not part of a Trinity. The holy spirit is God's active force that he uses to accomplish his will. It is not equal to God but is always at his disposition and subordinate to him." "The Holy Spirit—God's Active Force, *Should You Believe in the Trinity?*, (Watchtower Bible And Track Society of Pennsylvania, 1989), pp. 20, 23.
2. "The holy spirit is not a person and is therefore not one of the gods of the trinity....the holy spirit is the holy power of Jehovah God conferred upon his beloved Son and upon others whom he authorized to represent him." J. F. Rutherford, *Reconciliation*, (Brooklyn, 1928), pp. 115,116.

B. Others do not know what to think concerning the Spirit.

1. The term *Spirit* or the KJV's usage of *Ghost* conjures up all sorts of speculations concerning Him (almost to the point of some Casper the Ghost type thinking).
2. If we understand that the Spirit is a person, then what type of a person? Is He divine as is God the Father and God the Son?

II. HE IS A PERSON.

A. The language of the Bible is that the Spirit is a masculine personality; It uses personal pronouns, masculine gender and singular number.

B. He has personal actions (that cannot be said of a force, power, or thing).

1. He speaks
 - a. 1 Tim. 4:1 "Now the Spirit speaketh expressly, that in the latter times some shall depart from the faith, giving heed to seducing spirits, and doctrines of devils;"
 - b. A part of that speaking involves **teaching** them all things that pertain to life and godliness.
 - (1) 2 Pet. 1:3-4 "According as his divine power hath given unto us all things that *pertain* unto life and godliness, through the knowledge of him that hath called us to glory and virtue: ⁴Whereby are given unto us exceeding great and precious promises: that by these ye might be partakers of the divine nature, having escaped the corruption that is in the world through lust."
 - (2) John 14:26 "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."
 - (3) He was going to **guide** the apostles through the Word which the apostles spoke and wrote; John 16:13 "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."

2. He leads and forbids;
 - a. Acts 16:6-7 “Now when they had gone throughout Phrygia and the region of Galatia, and were forbidden of the Holy Ghost to preach the word in Asia, ⁷ After they were come to Mysia, they assayed to go into Bithynia: but the Spirit suffered them not.”
 - b. The type of forbidding shows purpose so the Spirit could lead Paul to another place; Acts 16:9 “And a vision appeared to Paul in the night; There stood a man of Macedonia, and prayed him, saying, Come over into Macedonia, and help us.”
 3. He searches
 - a. 1 Cor. 2:10 “But God hath revealed them unto us by his Spirit: for the Spirit searcheth all things, yea, the deep things of God.”
 - b. The Spirit is searching God’s mind and then **revealing** it to us;
 - (1) Eph. 3:4-5 “Whereby, when ye read, ye may understand my knowledge in the mystery of Christ) ⁵ Which in other ages was not made known unto the sons of men, as it is now revealed unto his holy apostles and prophets by the Spirit;”
 - (2) He kept things hidden prior to Christ’s time and only revealing them in prophecy and types.
 - (a) 1 Pet. 1:10-12 “Of which salvation the prophets have enquired and searched diligently, who prophesied of the grace *that should come* unto you: ¹¹Searching what, or what manner of time the Spirit of Christ which was in them did signify, when it testified beforehand the sufferings of Christ, and the glory that should follow. ¹²Unto whom it was revealed, that not unto themselves, but unto us they did minister the things, which are now reported unto you by them that have preached the gospel unto you with the Holy Ghost sent down from heaven; which things the angels desire to look into.”
 - (b) This takes **intelligence, planning and intention.**
 4. He comforts us.
 - a. Acts 9:31 “Then had the churches rest throughout all Judaea and Galilee and Samaria, and were edified; and walking in the fear of the Lord, and in the comfort of the Holy Ghost, were multiplied.”
 - b. He does this through the Word; 1 The. 4:18 “Wherefore comfort one another with these words.”
 5. He intercedes
 - a. Rom. 8:26 “Likewise the Spirit also helpeth our infirmities: for we know not what we should pray for as we ought: but the Spirit itself maketh intercession for us with groanings which cannot be uttered.”
 - b. Vine’s says of intercession: “to make a petition or intercede on behalf of another” which only a person can do.
- C. He has personal traits.**
1. **Mind**; Rom. 8:27 “And he that searcheth the hearts knoweth what is the mind of the Spirit, because he maketh intercession for the saints according to the will of God.”
 2. **Knowledge**
 - a. 1 Cor. 2:11 “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.”
 - b. As the Spirit searches the deep things of God, He learns and comes to a knowledge of these things, and reveals them by inspiration to the apostles and by their written record to us. This type of knowledge is only found in persons.
 3. **Will, the power of volition**; 1 Cor. 12:11 “But all these worketh that one and the selfsame Spirit, dividing to every man severally as he will.”
 4. **Affections**; Rom. 15:30 “Now I beseech you, brethren, for the Lord Jesus Christ’s sake, and for the **love** of the Spirit, that ye strive together with me in *your* prayers to God for me;”

5. We can have **fellowship** with Him
 - a. 2 Cor. 13:14 “The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, and the love of God, and the communion of the Holy Ghost, be with you all. Amen.
 - b. We can only have fellowship (in its true definition) with persons.
 - c. Fellowship is associated with affections; Phi. 2:1 “If *there be* therefore any consolation in Christ, if any comfort of love, if any fellowship of the Spirit, if any bowels and mercies,”
 - (1) Associated with consolation (exhortation) in Christ.
 - (2) Associated with comfort we receive because of the love one has for others and they have for us.
 - (3) Bowels is the seat of emotions and especially tenderness, kindness, benevolence, compassion, etc.
 - (4) Mercies is compassion or pity.
6. **Goodness**
 - a. Levites rehearsing what God had done; Neh. 9:20 “Thou gavest also thy good spirit to instruct them, and withheldest not thy manna from their mouth, and gavest them water for their thirst.”
 - b. David’s remembrance; Psa. 143:10 “Teach me to do thy will; for thou art my God: thy spirit is good; lead me into the land of uprightness.”

D. He suffers slights and injuries.

1. He can be **blasphemed**
 - a. Mat. 12:31 “Wherefore I say unto you, All manner of sin and blasphemy shall be forgiven unto men: but the blasphemy against the Holy Ghost shall not be forgiven unto men.”
 - b. Blaspheme is to slander, or speech injurious to another’s good name; impious and reproachful speech injurious to divine majesty. This shows He is a person and God.
2. He can be **lied to**; Acts 5:3 “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?”
3. He can be **resisted**
 - a. Acts 7:51 “Ye stiffnecked and uncircumcised in heart and ears, ye do always resist the Holy Ghost: as your fathers *did*, so *do* ye.”
 - b. Since Stephen was being lead by the Spirit in what He said, they refused to hear his message, they resisted the Spirit.
4. He can be **grieved and vexed**
 - a. Eph. 4:30 “And grieve not the holy Spirit of God, whereby ye are sealed unto the day of redemption.”
 - b. Matthew Henry wrote, “By looking to what precedes, and to what follows, we may see what it is that grieves the Spirit of God. In the previous verses it is intimated that all lewdness and filthiness, lying, and corrupt communications that stir up filthy appetites and lusts, grieve the Spirit of God. In what follows it is intimated that those corrupt passions of bitterness, and wrath, and anger, and clamour, and evil speaking, and malice, grieve this good Spirit.”
5. He can be **quenched**; 1 The. 5:19 “Quench not the Spirit.”
6. He can be **despised**; Heb. 10:29 “Of how much sorer punishment, suppose ye, shall he be thought worthy, who hath trodden under foot the Son of God, and hath counted the blood of the covenant, wherewith he was sanctified, an unholy thing, and hath done despite unto the Spirit of grace?”

III. HE IS GOD.

A. He has all the traits and prerogatives of God.

1. God is **eternal**
 - a. Father;
 - (1) Psa. 41:13 “Blessed *be* the LORD God of Israel from everlasting, and to everlasting. Amen, and Amen.”
 - (2) Psa. 90:2 “Before the mountains were brought forth, or ever thou hadst formed the earth and the world, even from everlasting to everlasting, thou *art* God.”
 - b. Son; John 1:1 “In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God.”
 - c. Spirit; Heb. 9:14 “How much more shall the blood of Christ, who through the eternal Spirit offered himself without spot to God, purge your conscience from dead works to serve the living God?”
2. God is **omniscient**
 - a. Father; 1 John 3:20 “For if our heart condemn us, God is greater than our heart, and knoweth all things.”
 - b. Son; John 2:24-25 “But Jesus did not commit himself unto them, because he knew all *men*,²⁵ And needed not that any should testify of man: for he knew what was in man.”
 - c. Spirit; 1 Cor. 2:10-11 “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.”
3. God is **omnipotent**
 - a. Father; Job 42:1-2 “Then Job answered the LORD, and said, ²I know that thou canst do every *thing*, and *that* no thought can be withholden from thee.”
 - b. Son; Heb. 1:1-3 “God, who at sundry times and in divers manners spake in time past unto the fathers by the prophets, ²Hath in these last days spoken unto us by *his* Son, whom he hath appointed heir of all things, by whom also he made the worlds; ³Who being the brightness of *his* glory, and the express image of his person, and upholding all things by the word of his power, when he had by himself purged our sins, sat down on the right hand of the Majesty on high;”
 - c. Spirit
 - (1) Micah 3:8 “But truly I am full of power by the spirit of the LORD, and of judgment, and of might, to declare unto Jacob his transgression, and to Israel his sin.”
 - (2) Rom. 15:19 “Through mighty signs and wonders, by the power of the Spirit of God; so that from Jerusalem, and round about unto Illyricum, I have fully preached the gospel of Christ.”
4. God is **omnipresent**
 - a. Father
 - (1) Pro. 15:3 “The eyes of the LORD *are* in every place, beholding the evil and the good.”
 - (2) Three times Jesus declares, “thy Father which seeth in secret himself shall reward thee openly” (Mat. 6:4, 6, 18).
 - b. Spirit; Psa. 139:7 “Whither shall I go from thy spirit? or whither shall I flee from thy presence?”
5. God is **truth**
 - a. Satan is a liar; John 8:44 “Ye are of *your* father the devil, and the lusts of your father ye will do. He was a murderer from the beginning, and abode not in the truth, because there is no truth in him. When he speaketh a lie, he speaketh of his own: for he is a liar, and the father of it.”
 - b. Father; John 17:17 “Sanctify them through thy truth: thy word is truth.”

- c. Son; John 1:14, 17; 14:6 “And the Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us, (and we beheld his glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father,) full of grace and truth....¹⁷For the law was given by Moses, *but* grace and truth came by Jesus Christ....^{14:6}Jesus saith unto him, I am the way, the truth, and the life: no man cometh unto the Father, but by me.”
- d. Spirit
 - (1) Jesus uses the phrase “Spirit of truth” three times referring to the Holy Spirit.
 - (a) John 14:17 “*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.”
 - (b) John 15:26 “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:”
 - (c) John 16:13 “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.”
 - (2) 1 John 5:6 “This is he that came by water and blood, *even* Jesus Christ; not by water only, but by water and blood. And it is the Spirit that beareth witness, because the Spirit is truth.”

B. He does the works of God.

1. He had a part in the creation process.
 - a. Gen. 1:2-3 “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. ³ And God said, Let there be light: and there was light.”
 - b. Job 26:13 “By his spirit he hath garnished the heavens; his hand hath formed the crooked serpent.”
2. He has a work in revelation
 - a. 1 Cor. 2:10 “But God hath revealed them unto us by his Spirit: for the Spirit searcheth all things, yea, the deep things of God.”
 - b. 2 Pet. 1:20-21 “Knowing this first, that no prophecy of the scripture is of any private interpretation. ²¹ For the prophecy came not in old time by the will of man: but holy men of God spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost.”
3. He works in the affairs of man.
 - a. In overruling natural law—performing miracles
 - (1) Heb. 2:4 “God also bearing *them* witness, both with signs and wonders, and with divers miracles, and gifts of the Holy Ghost, according to his own will?”
 - (2) Paul declares the Spirit gives various miraculous gifts to men (1 Cor. 12:4-11).
 - b. In controlling and using natural law—providence; (in discussing what God does for the beast) Psa. 104:30 “Thou sendest forth thy spirit, they are created: and thou renewest the face of the earth.”
4. He has a part in salvation
 - a. Salvation of man from sin resides in God; Eph. 2:8 “For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: *it is* the gift of God:”
 - b. Jesus certainly played a major part by dying on the cross for man’s sins.
 - c. The Spirit is also involved.
 - (1) John 3:5 “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.”
 - (2) Tit. 3:5 “Not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to his mercy he saved us, by the washing of regeneration, and renewing of the Holy Ghost;”

5. He is involved in the resurrection of Christ; Rom. 8:11 “But if the Spirit of him that raised up Jesus from the dead dwell in you, he that raised up Christ from the dead shall also quicken your mortal bodies by his Spirit that dwelleth in you.”
- C. His name is used with God.**
1. At Jesus’ baptism; Mat. 3:16-17 “And Jesus, when he was baptized, went up straightway out of the water: and, lo, the heavens were opened unto him, and he saw the Spirit of God descending like a dove, and lighting upon him: ¹⁷And lo a voice from heaven, saying, This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased.
 2. Mat. 28:19 “Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost:”
 - a. The definite article appears before each of the three—Father, Son and Holy Spirit showing that there are three distinct persons and not three manifestations of one person.
 - b. “Into the name” shows we have a relationship into which we are baptized. It would be inconsistent for Jesus to affirm that we are baptized into a relationship with the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit, if all three do not possess the same nature.
- D. Ananias’ lie to the Spirit, God; Acts 5:3-4** “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.”

Conclusion: While we have only been able to touch the hem of the garment, I believe that this gives us a good start to study and draw the proper conclusions concerning the Holy Spirit.