

Greater Works Christian Church

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Holy Spirit, Part 1 The Nature of God's Spirit

"The Holy Spirit is the eternal Spirit of God- God Himself. God is always God, and He does not change (Mal 3:6; James 1:17). The Spirit is the same in the Old Testament as He is in the New Testament. As Jesus clearly taught, God in His essential being is Spirit (John 4:24). God's Spirit, the Holy Spirit, is His very self, not merely an attribute or function of God."

The Holy Spirit in the Bible- *John Rea*

Question: When you think of Holy Spirit, do think of Him being God? If yes, how/why? If no, why?

The First place Holy Spirit is Mentioned

Genesis 1:1-2

- 1 In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth.
- 2 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.

Holy Spirit was at the point of creation. From the beginning, Holy Spirit has been in the earth bringing order out of chaos.

The Deity and Personhood of Holy Spirit

Deuteronomy 4:35

To you it was shown, that you might know that the LORD Himself *is* God; *there is* none other besides Him.

Deuteronomy 6:4

"Hear, O Israel: The LORD our God, the LORD *is* one!

(Note: one can be translated "alone" as well.)

The great statement of Israel's faith, the nations rallying cry of old and Judaism's motto today, is the "Shema": ***"Hear, O Israel: The LORD our God, the LORD is one!", or "YeHovah is our God, YeHovah is One!"***

From the very beginning God established His "Oneness." During the time of the early Fathers (Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, Moses, etc.) there was a great deal of Polytheistic

worship in that region of the world. We know God to be a “Trinity” (Tri-unity, three in one), but His Oneness had to be first emphasized and embraced so that man would not try to worship three God’s, but the One true God. This is very important for us today as well. We must know that our God is truly One God, but He is found in three distinct persons: God the Father, God the Son and God the Holy Spirit. Not three separate God’s or people, but three aspects (persons) of the same God. Similar to us being spirit, soul and body (a trinity; three in one).

Genesis 1:26-27

26 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."

27 So God created man in His *own* image; in the image of God He created him; male and female He created them.

Genesis 3:22

Then the LORD God said, "Behold, the man has become like one of Us, to know good and evil. And now, lest he put out his hand and take also of the tree of life, and eat, and live forever"—

Genesis 11:7

Then the LORD God said, "Behold, the man has become like one of Us, to know good and evil. And now, lest he put out his hand and take also of the tree of life, and eat, and live forever"—

As these three passages show, God, although One, is comprised of more than one person. This is why the One true God can refer to Himself as “Us”, and “Our.”

It remained for Jesus and the Apostles to explain more clearly that God is triune. The one true God has always existed in three distinct Persons- God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Spirit- coequal in honor and power. While the word “trinity” appears nowhere in the Bible, Biblical texts affirm that there is only one Supreme Being.

1 Corinthians 8:6

yet for us *there is* one God, the Father, of whom *are* all things, and we for Him; and one Lord Jesus Christ, through whom *are* all things, and through whom we *live*.

Of only one divine essence or nature-

John 10:30

I and My Father are one.

Hebrews 1:3

who 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 at the right hand of the Majesty on high

Yet eternally existing in Three Distinct Persons-

John 1:1-2

1 In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God.

2 He was in the beginning with God.

John 5:17-18

17 But Jesus answered them, "My Father has been working until now, and I have been working."

18 Therefore the Jews sought all the more to kill Him, because He not only broke the Sabbath, but also said that God was His Father, making Himself equal with God.

Matthew 28:19

Go therefore and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit,

1 Corinthians 12:3-6

3 Therefore I make known to you that no one speaking by the Spirit of God calls Jesus accursed, and no one can say that Jesus is Lord except by the Holy Spirit.

4 There are diversities of gifts, but the same Spirit.

5 There are differences of ministries, but the same Lord.

6 And there are diversities of activities, but it is the same God who works all in all.

2 Corinthians 13:14

The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, and the love of God, and the communion of the Holy Spirit *be* with you all. Amen.

1 Peter 1:2

elect according to the foreknowledge of God the Father, in sanctification of the Spirit, for obedience and sprinkling of the blood of Jesus Christ

As Christian believers today we must hold tenaciously both to the "oneness" and to the "threeness" of God. Every cult and heresy of our time falls short in believing both aspects of this Biblical revelation of God's nature.

The overall teaching of the Bible about the Holy Spirit shows that He is fully deity, not simply an apparition of God and not a subordinate spirit such as an angel or demon.

Question: Many have taught that God is in three parts, Father, Son and Holy Spirit, but these three parts of God are in an order, Father being the most important, Jesus the Son

being next in power and importance and finally the Holy Spirit being last in importance. Is this how we should understand the Triune God? Please explain.

The identity of the Spirit with God is more certain in Acts 5.

Acts 5:3-4

3 But Peter said, "Ananias, why has Satan filled your heart to lie to the Holy Spirit and keep back *part* of the price of the land for yourself?

4 While it remained, was it not your own? And after it was sold, was it not in your own control? Why have you conceived this thing in your heart? You have not lied to men but to God."

The Bible indicates that Holy Spirit has personality. That is, He is a person. He is not a mere influence, force or power. He has intelligence- He can hear, speak and teach.

John 14:26

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.

John 16:13-14

13 However, when He, the Spirit of truth, has come, He will guide you into all truth; for He will not speak on His own *authority*, but whatever He hears He will speak; and He will tell you things to come.

14 He will glorify Me, for He will take of what is Mine and declare *it* to you.

The Holy Spirit has emotions, for He can be grieved.

Isaiah 63:10

But they rebelled and grieved His Holy Spirit; So He turned Himself against them as an enemy, *And* He fought against them.

Ephesians 4:30

And do not grieve the Holy Spirit of God, by whom you were sealed for the day of redemption.

The New Testament makes a distinction between divine power and the Holy Spirit as a Person.

Acts 10:38

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.

1 Thessalonians 1:5

For our gospel did not come to you in word only, but also **in power, and in the Holy Spirit** and in much assurance, as you know what kind of men we were among you for your sake.

Question: In the Bible, emotions and human like attributes are attributed to Holy Spirit. This shows that Holy Spirit experiences the same emotions and feeling we do. Does this change the way you understand the nature of Holy Spirit? If yes, please explain. If no, please explain.

The Prophet Ezekiel described how God's Spirit entered him and spoke with him.

Ezekiel 3:24-27

24 Then the Spirit entered me and set me on my feet, and spoke with me and said to me: "Go, shut yourself inside your house.

25 And you, O son of man, surely they will put ropes on you and bind you with them, so that you cannot go out among them.

26 I will make your tongue cling to the roof of your mouth, so that you shall be mute and not be one to rebuke them, for they *are* a rebellious house.

27 But when I speak with you, I will open your mouth, and you shall say to them, 'Thus says the Lord GOD.' He who hears, let him hear; and he who refuses, let him refuse; for they *are* a rebellious house.

Question: How has Holy Spirit spoken to you or through you? Share how Holy Spirit has empowered you to help others.

The "Trinity" in the Previous Covenant

Isaiah 48:12-16

12 "Listen to Me, O Jacob, And Israel, My called: I *am* He, I *am* the First, I *am* also the Last.

13 Indeed My hand has laid the foundation of the earth, And My right hand has stretched out the heavens; *When* I call to them, They stand up together.

14 "All of you, assemble yourselves, and hear! Who among them has declared these *things*? The LORD loves him; He shall do His pleasure on Babylon, And His arm *shall be against* the Chaldeans.

15 I, *even* I, have spoken; Yes, I have called him, I have brought him, and his way will prosper.

16 "Come near to Me, hear this: I have not spoken in secret from the beginning; From the time that it was, I *was* there. And now the Lord GOD and His Spirit Have sent Me."

Here is one of the greatest Old Testament examples of the "Trinity" in scriptures. As we can see from verse 12, this is clearly God speaking. We can see that it is God who

continues to speak throughout the rest of this verses (12-16). Notice what “God” says (in verse 16), ***“the Lord God and His Spirit have sent Me.”*** This would seem strange in any other context, but as we have learned of the triune nature of God, this makes perfect sense. This is clearly a passage that prophetically describes the coming of Jesus, and the Holy Spirit.

Question: What has been your understanding of who Holy Spirit is? How has this outline helped you to understand Holy Spirit better?