

At that moment heaven was opened, and he saw the Spirit of God descending like a dove and lighting on him – Mt. 3:16



**THE MINISTRY OF
THE HOLY SPIRIT**

The following outline and notes are taken from a Sunday School class written and taught by Pastor Don Kimbro at Heights Christian Church from September 25 - December 18, 2005. All material in the booklet is copyrighted. The author grants permission to any individual or nonprofit organization to copy for noncommercial purposes. For questions, additions, corrections, information, or constructive comments, please contact Pastor Don Kimbro at dokimbro@aol.com.

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The Ministry Of The Holy Spirit

Welcome to my study of the person of the Holy Spirit. In my view, this is one of the most important Scriptural pursuits of our day, because I believe that the one person of the Godhead most misunderstood and consistently ignored by the church is the person of the Holy Spirit—and yet *it is the ministry of the Holy Spirit that is in the world today* and has been since the ascension of Jesus Christ into heaven (Acts 1:9-11).

The Bible teaches us an important doctrinal corollary in this regard: God sent His Son and His Son sent the Holy Spirit. In one of His last major discourses with His disciples, Jesus said, “When the Counselor 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” (Jn. 15:26). Later in the same discourse He further defines the Holy Spirit's ministry, “But I tell you the truth: It is for your good that I am going away. Unless I go away, the Counselor will not come to you; but if I go, *I will send him to you*. When he comes, he will convict the world of guilt in regard to sin and righteousness and judgment: in regard to sin, because men do not believe in me; in regard to righteousness, because I am going to the Father, where you can see me no longer; and in regard to judgment, because the prince of this world now stands condemned” (Jn. 16:7-11).

The apostle Paul taught this same truth to the church. Notice the sequence, “When the time had fully come, God sent his Son, born of a woman, born under law, to redeem those under law, that we might receive the full rights of sons. Because you are sons, God sent the Spirit of his Son into our hearts, the Spirit who calls out, “*Abba, Father.*” (Gal. 4:4-6).

Right before our Lord's ascension into heaven, He instructed His followers to await for the gift and ministry of the Holy Spirit, that they might receive the power to proclaim the message of the kingdom He had invested to them to their generation and those that would follow as disciples (Acts 1:8). On the day of Pentecost (Acts 2:4) the ministry of the Holy Spirit was fully manifested and continues to this day. It will not be complete on the earth until the Holy Spirit is “taken out of the way” as the time of the end unfolds (2 Thessa. 2:7).

R.A. Torrey, the outstanding American pastor, evangelist, educator, author and successor to Dwight L. Moody, perhaps said it best, “The doctrine of the Personality and Deity of the Holy Spirit is both fundamental and vital. Any one who does not know the Holy Spirit as a person has not attained to a complete and well-rounded Christian experience. Any one who knows God the Father and God the Son, but who does not know God the Holy Spirit has not attained unto the Christian conception of God, nor to a fully Christian experience.” (www.WholesomeWords.org, "The Personality of the Holy Spirit," R. A. Torrey).

My prayer is that this study will not only make you more aware of the ministry, power and “fellowship of the Holy Spirit” (2 Cor. 13:14), but will excite and complete your relationship with our Almighty God, to fulfill the command to “Be filled with the Spirit” (Eph. 5:18).

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The Ministry Of The Holy Spirit

The Personality of the Holy Spirit

I. Introduction

A. Some of the Questions We Will Answer in This Study

1. Who is the Holy Spirit?
2. Who is the primary agent in the Godhead working in the world today?
3. What was the gift promised by the Father that Jesus spoke of to his disciples?
4. What does it mean to "be filled with the Spirit"?
5. What is the baptism with the Holy Spirit?
6. Did the gifts of the Holy Spirit cease when the last book of the Bible was written or the last apostle died?
7. What about speaking in tongues and prophecy?

II. Responses To The Holy Spirit

- A. Please don't take Him away! See *Psm. 51:11*.
- B. They didn't want anything to do with Him. See *Acts 7:51*.
- C. Never heard of Him. See *Acts 19:2-3*.
- D. Amazement. See *Acts 2:7-8, 12*.
- E. Filled with joy! See *Acts 13:52; Rom. 14:17*.

III. The Doctrine of the Trinity

- A. There is one God manifested in three persons: the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit.
 1. It is a mystery. See *1 Tim. 3:16*.
 2. See note on eusebeia (godliness).

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Psm. 51:11:

Do not cast me from your presence or take your Holy Spirit from me.

Acts 7:51: "You stiff-necked people, with uncircumcised hearts and ears! You are just like your fathers: You always resist the Holy Spirit!"

Acts 19:2-3:

While Apollos was at Corinth, Paul took the road through the interior and arrived at Ephesus. There he found some disciples and asked them, "Did you receive the Holy Spirit when you believed?" They answered, "No, we have not even heard that there is a Holy Spirit."

Acts 2:7-8: Utterly amazed, they asked: "Are not all these men who are speaking Galileans? Then how is it that each of us hears them in his own native language?"

Acts 2:12: ¹² Amazed and perplexed, they asked one another, "What does this mean?"

Acts 13:52:

And the disciples were filled with joy and with the Holy Spirit.

Rom. 14:17:

For the kingdom of God is not a matter of eating and drinking, but of righteousness, peace and joy in the Holy Spirit . . .

1 Tim. 3:16 (NIV):

Beyond all question, the mystery of godliness is great: He appeared in a body, was vindicated by the Spirit, was seen by angels, was preached among the nations, was believed on in the world, was taken up in glory.

B. How do we find answers to His mysteries?

1. Know that we are limited. See *Isaiah 55:8-9*.
2. By our taking His word for what it says about the nature of God.

C. In Hebrew, the singular word for *God* is "El," the dual tense is "Elah," and to indicate more than two the word is "Elohim."

1. *Elohim* is the word translated *God* in *Gen. 1:1-2*.

IV. The Holy Spirit is a Person

A. The Holy Spirit is thought by some to be an "essence" or "power" rather than a person.

1. *Ruach*, the Hebrew word for *Spirit*, also means "breath."
2. *Pneuma*, the Greek word for *Spirit*, also means "wind" or "air."
3. The proper translation is determined by the context where the word is found.

B. The Arian heresy has led to many cults.

1. Almost all cults deny the deity of Christ and the person of the Holy Spirit.

C. The Holy Spirit has the characteristics of a person.

1. All characteristics of personality: knowledge, feeling and will are ascribed to the Holy Spirit.
2. The Holy Spirit searches and has knowledge. See *1 Cor. 2:10-11*.
3. The Holy Spirit distributes gifts as He wills. See *1 Cor. 12:11*.
4. The Holy Spirit has a mind. See *Rom. 8:27*.
5. The Holy Spirit loves us. See *Rom. 15:30*.
6. The Holy Spirit can be grieved. See *Eph. 4:30*.

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eusebeia (translated godliness) refers to a holy life resulting from God's incarnation in the person of Jesus Christ when that incarnation and all that it entails is truly believed. A holiness initiated in the life of the believer by Christ Himself through the Holy Spirit (*Zodhiates*, p. 684).

Isa. 55:8-9:

"For my thoughts are not your thoughts neither are your ways my ways," declares the LORD. "As the heavens are higher than the earth, so are my ways higher than your ways and my thoughts than your thoughts."

Gen. 1:1-2:

In the beginning God (*Elohim*) created the heavens and the earth. Now the earth was formless and empty, darkness was over the surface of the deep, and the Spirit (*ruach*) of God (*Elohim*) was hovering over the waters.

1 Cor. 2:10-11:

The Spirit searches all things, even the deep things of God. For who among men knows the thoughts of a man except the man's spirit within him? In the same way no one knows the thoughts of God except the Spirit of God.

1 Cor. 12:11:

All these (gifts) are the work of one and the same Spirit, and he gives them to each one, just as he determines.

Rom. 8:27:

And he who searches our hearts knows the mind of the Spirit, because the Spirit intercedes for the saints in accordance with God's will.

Rom. 15:30:

I urge you, brothers, by our Lord Jesus Christ and by the love of the Spirit, to join me in my struggle by praying to God for me.

- D. Personal pronouns are used when referring to the Holy Spirit. *See Jn. 14:16-17; Jn. 16:7-15.*
1. "*Counselor*" in Jn. 14:16 is "parakletos" from para (beside) + kaleo (to call). It literally means "one who comes alongside of to help."
 2. The Holy Spirit is always with us ready to help when we ask Him. *See Jn. 16:13.*
- E. Personal acts are ascribed to the Holy Spirit.
1. The Holy Spirit speaks. *See Acts 13:2.*
 2. The Holy Spirit intercedes for us. *See Rom. 8:26.*
 3. The Holy Spirit teaches us. *See 1 Jn. 2:20-27; Jn. 14:26.*
 4. The Holy Spirit guides and sometimes forbids. *See Acts 16:6-7.*
 5. The Holy Spirit strives with man. *See Gen. 6:3.*
- F. The Holy Spirit can receive treatment as a person.
1. We can insult him: *See Heb. 10:29.*
 2. The Holy Spirit can be lied to. *See Acts 5:3.*
 3. The Holy Spirit can be blasphemed. *See Mt. 12:31-32.*
- G. The Holy Spirit is identified with the Father and the Son as a person.
1. He is named with the Father and the Son in baptism. *See Mt. 28:19.*
 2. The Holy Spirit is named with the Father and the Son in benediction. *See 2 Cor. 13:14.*
 3. The Holy Spirit is identified with the believers as a person. *See Acts 15:28.*

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Eph. 4:30:

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

Jn. 14:16-17:

And I will ask the Father, and he will give you another Counselor to be with you forever — the Spirit of truth. The world cannot accept him, because it neither sees him nor knows him. But you know him, for he lives with you and will be in you.

Jn. 16:13:

"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.

Acts 13:2:

While they were worshiping the Lord and fasting, the Holy Spirit said, "Set apart for me Barnabas and Saul for the work to which I have called them."

Rom. 8:26:

In the same way, the Spirit helps us in our weakness. We do not know what we ought to pray for, but the Spirit himself intercedes for us with groans that words cannot express.

Jn. 14:26:

But the Counselor, 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.

Acts 16:6-7:

Paul and his companions traveled throughout the region of Phrygia and Galatia, having been kept by the Holy Spirit from preaching the word in the province of Asia. ⁷ When they came to the border of Mysia, they tried to enter Bithynia, but the Spirit of Jesus would not allow them to.

Gen. 6:3:

Then the LORD said, "My Spirit will not contend with man forever, for he is mortal; his days will be a hundred and twenty years.

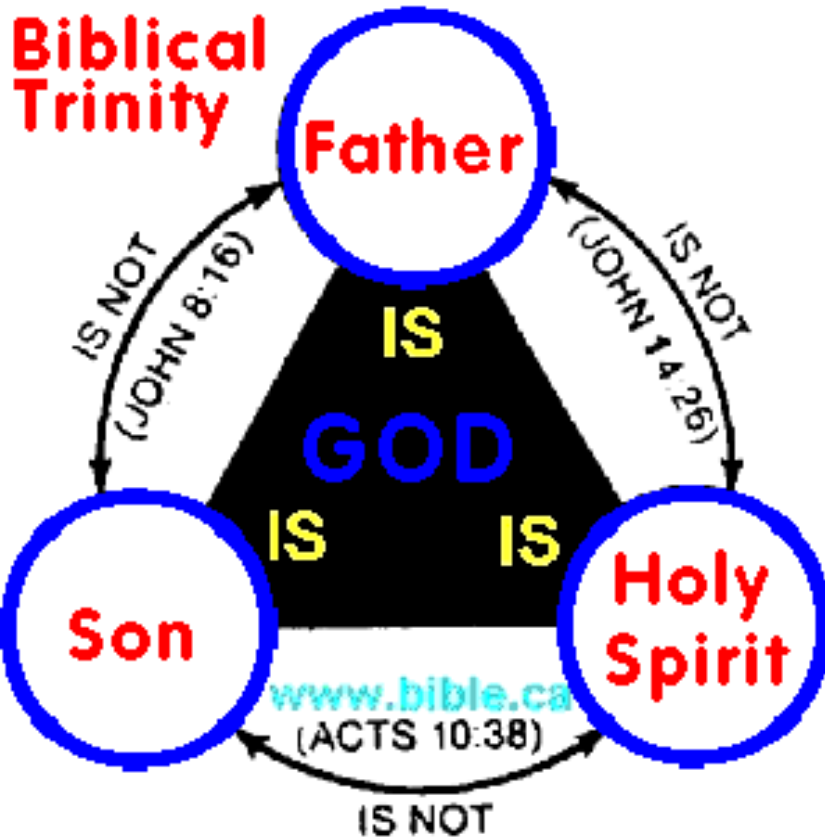
V. Old Testament References to the Holy Spirit:

- A. There are 85 references to the Holy Spirit, Spirit of God or spirit (Gen. 1:2; Psa. 51:11; Isa. 63:10-11).

VI. The Scriptural Pattern of the Trinity:

- A. The Father Sent The Son. See *Jn. 17:3*.
- B. The Son Sent The Holy Spirit. See *Jn. 15:26, 16:7*.
- C. It is the ministry of the Holy Spirit that is in the world today. See *Lk. 24:49; Acts 1:8*.

VII. A Helpful Diagram Of The Trinity:



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Heb. 10:29: How much more severely do you think a man deserves to be punished who has trampled the Son of God under foot, who has treated as an unholy thing the blood of the covenant that sanctified him, and who has insulted the Spirit of grace?

Acts 5:3:

Then Peter said, "Ananias, how is it that Satan has so filled your heart that you have lied to the Holy Spirit and have kept for yourself some of the money you received for the land?"

Mt. 12:31-32:

And so I tell you, every sin and blasphemy will be forgiven men, but the blasphemy against the Spirit will not be forgiven. ³² Anyone who speaks a word against the Son of Man will be forgiven, but anyone who speaks against the Holy Spirit will not be forgiven, either in this age or in the age to come.

Mt. 28:19:

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.

2Cor. 13:14:

May the grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, and the love of God, and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit be with you all.

Acts 15:28: It seemed good to the Holy Spirit and to us not to burden you . . .

Jn. 17:3: Now this is eternal life: that they may know you, the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom you have sent.

Jn. 15:26: When the Counselor 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.

Jn. 16:7: But I tell you the truth: It is for your good that I am going away. Unless I go away, the Counselor will not come to you; but if I go, I will send him to you.

VII. Examples of Trinitarian or Creedal Statements And Confessions in Church History

A. The Nicene Creed

And we believe in the Holy Spirit, the Lord and Giver of Life, who proceedeth from the Father and the Son, who with the Father and the Son together is worshipped and glorified, who spoke by the prophets.

B. Athanasian Creed:

For the Father is one person, the Son is another, and the Spirit is still another. But the deity of the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit is one, equal in glory, coeternal in majesty.

C. The Apostle's Creed:

I believe in God, the Father Almighty, the Maker of heaven and earth, and in Jesus Christ, His only Son, our Lord: Who was conceived by the Holy Ghost, born of the virgin Mary, suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, dead, and buried; He descended into hell. The third day He arose again from the dead; He ascended into heaven, and sitteth on the right hand of God the Father Almighty; from thence he shall come to judge the quick and the dead. I believe in the Holy Ghost; the holy catholic church; the communion of saints; the forgiveness of sins; the resurrection of the body; and the life everlasting.

D. Westminster Confession:

There is but one living and true God. In the unity of the Godhead there are three persons. One God of one substance, power and eternity: God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Spirit.

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Lk. 24:49: I am going to send you what my Father has promised; but stay in the city until you have been clothed with power from on high.”

Acts 1:8: But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes on you; and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth.