

The Holy Spirit



However, you are not in the flesh but in the Spirit, if indeed the Spirit of God dwells in you. But if anyone does not have the Spirit of Christ, he does not belong to Him. Romans 8:9 (NASB)

Simon Magus was no ordinary magician (Acts 8:9-13, 18-19, 24). He did not just do magic; he did great magic. He astonished the people of Samaria (v. 9) so much that they called him the “Great Power of God” (v. 10). The attention he received from them was impressive. Some today would like that kind of power and honor. But along came some strangers: Philip first, and then the apostles Peter and John. Simon had been watching them do signs and perform miracles. One day he saw a “magic trick” he wanted. “Give this authority to me as well, so that everyone on whom I lay my hands may receive the Holy Spirit,” he said. He wanted to be able to perform that magic trick! Some in the church today see another person ministering for the Lord, and they become jealous. Just like Simon, they want significance. Just like Simon, some do not understand the Holy Spirit or how He works either. Simon was not alone. He merely thought the Holy Spirit was a power or a force. This study will explore who is the Holy Spirit, what does He do, and why He is important to every believer. If you desire to know more about the Holy Spirit, then this study is for you.

FALSE TEACHINGS ABOUT THE HOLY SPIRIT. In A.D. 215, Sabellius claimed that God the Father was like an actor who played different roles. Sometimes He acted like the Son and sometimes He acted like the Holy Spirit. Sabellius rejected the idea that God was a trinity, one God who is the Father, Son, and the Holy Spirit. This heretical teaching is still accepted by many Christians today. One would think that Christians would have known and understood the truth.

One hundred years later, Arius (approximately A.D. 325) taught that God the Father had created Jesus first, and then Jesus created the Holy Spirit. The Council of Nicaea was convened in A.D. 325 and the council rejected this teaching as heresy.

Macedonius taught another heresy about the Holy Spirit. He claimed the Holy Spirit was not God but was simply a creature.

This false teaching was also rejected by the Council of Constantinople in A.D. 381 which finally affirmed the truth: the Holy Spirit was God. At this council the Athanasian Creed (4th - 5th century) was established. It clearly states the Father, the Son, and Holy Spirit are one God.

HOLY SPIRIT IS A PERSON. Some have taught that the Holy Spirit was a force and not a person. But if we examine the Scriptures, we find that is not true. Read each verse and write down the number of times the Holy Spirit is referred to as “He” and “Him.”

John 14:16-17 5 (NASB), 5 (ESV)

John 14:26 1 (NASB), 1 (ESV)

John 15:26 1 (NASB), 1 (ESV)

Now as you think about those three passages, answer these questions:

Holy Spirit — Athanasian Creed (A.D. 570)

5. For there is one person of the Father, another of the Son, and another of the Holy Spirit.
6. But the Godhead of the Father, of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit is all one, the glory equal, the majesty coeternal.
7. Such as the Father is, such is the Son, and such is the Holy Spirit.
8. The Father uncreated, the Son uncreated, and the Holy Spirit uncreated.
9. The Father incomprehensible, the Son incomprehensible, and the Holy Spirit incomprehensible.
10. The Father eternal, the Son eternal, and the Holy Spirit eternal.
13. So likewise the Father is almighty, the Son almighty, and the Holy Spirit almighty.
14. And yet they are not three almighties, but one almighty.
15. So the Father is God, the Son is God, and the Holy Spirit is God;
16. And yet they are not three Gods, but one God.
17. So likewise the Father is Lord, the Son Lord, and the Holy Spirit Lord.
23. The Holy Spirit is of the Father and of the Son; neither made, nor created, nor begotten, but proceeding.
24. So there is one Father, not three Fathers; one Son, not three Sons; one Holy Spirit, not three Holy Spirits.

1. Why do the words “He” and “Him” reveal the Holy Spirit is a person?

We use “it” for things and “he,” “him,” “she,” and “her” for people.

2. Look up the following passages and write down the characteristic which reveals the Holy Spirit is a person.

Passage	What Characteristics Reveal the Spirit Is A Person?	Passage	What Characteristics Reveal the Spirit Is A Person?
John 15:26	Advocates or helps believers.	1 Cor. 2:13	Teaches believers the Bible.
Acts 10:19-21	Speaks.	1 Cor. 12:7, 11	Gives spiritual gifts.
Ephesians 4:30	Can be grieved.	1 Thess. 5:19	Can be quenched.
1 Thess. 1:6	Gives joy.	2 Pet. 1:20-21	Wrote the Bible by moving men.

3. What does Romans 8:27 reveal the Holy Spirit possesses that we also possess?

The Holy Spirit has a will just as we have a will, but He does not sin.

4. What do Isaiah 63:10 and 1 Thessalonians 5:19 reveal the Holy Spirit possesses that we also possess?

The Holy Spirit has emotions just as we have emotions, but He does not sin.

5. What does Acts 13:2 reveal the Holy Spirit possesses that we also possess?

The Holy Spirit makes decisions just as we make decisions.

HOLY SPIRIT IS GOD. Acts 5:3-5 is an important passage that proves the Holy Spirit is God. In Acts 5:1-2 are told that a couple in the early church sold some land they owned, kept part of the money for themselves, and then went to church and claimed they were donating all of it. It was a lie. So, Peter says,

Ananias, why has Satan filled your heart to lie to the Holy Spirit, and to keep back some of the price of the land? While it remained unsold, did it not remain your own? And after it was sold, was it not under your control? Why is it that you have conceived this deed in your heart? You have not lied to men, but to God. Acts 5:3-5 (NASB)

Peter says Ananias lied to the Holy Spirit (v. 3). Then he adds something remarkable, “You have not lied to men, but to God.” Peter makes it clear that the Holy Spirit and God are the same. Here are some other passages that reveal the Holy Spirit is God.

1. According to Hebrews 9:14 how long has the Holy Spirit existed? How is He different than people?

The Holy Spirit is eternal. He is different than people because we are not eternal.

2. When did the Holy Spirit exist and what did He do according to Genesis 1:2?

The Holy Spirit existed before the universe or world was created. He created the universe or world.

3. In Matthew 12:31, Jesus said that “blasphemy against the Spirit shall not be forgiven.” What does that reveal about the Holy Spirit?

The Holy Spirit was and is God.

Names of the Holy Spirit

Spirit	Numbers 11:25
Spirit of Counsel and Might	Isaiah 11:2
Spirit of the Lord God	Isaiah 61:1
Spirit of God	Matthew 3:16
Spirit of the Lord	Luke 4:18
Spirit of Truth	John 14:17
Helper or Advocate	John 14:26
Spirit of Jesus	Acts 16:7
Spirit of Holiness	Romans 1:4
Spirit of Adoption	Romans 8:15
Spirit of Our God	1 Corinthians 6:11
Spirit of the Living God	2 Corinthians 3:3
Spirit of Faith	2 Corinthians 4:13
Spirit of His Son	Galatians 4:6
Spirit of Jesus Christ	Philippians 1:19
Spirit of Grace	Hebrews 10:29
Spirit of Glory	1 Peter 4:14

4. What does Psalm 139:7-10 reveal about the Holy Spirit? How are you different than the Holy Spirit?

The Holy Spirit is omnipresent. We are not everywhere present at the same time.

5. According to John 14:26 how much does the Holy Spirit remember?

The Holy Spirit remembers all things. That is why He could help the disciples remember all things. The Holy Spirit is omniscient.

MINISTRY OF THE HOLY SPIRIT BEFORE PENTECOST. The first chapter of Genesis tells us the Holy Spirit was involved in the creation (Genesis 1-2) along with the Father (Genesis 1:1; Isaiah 45:18) and Christ (Colossians 1:15-20). Job 33:4 says the Spirit made the patriarch Job. We are also told throughout the Old Testament that the Spirit ministered to the saints in different ways (Exodus 31:3). He temporarily filled some of the saints (for example Numbers 11:17-26; Judges 3:9-10; 6:34; 11:29; 13:25; 1 Samuel 10:6-10; 16:13-14; Isaiah 59:21; Ezekiel 2:2; Daniel 5:11). The Holy Spirit also moved the Old Testament prophets to write Scripture (2 Peter 1:20-21).

... for no prophecy was ever made by an act of human will, but men moved by the Holy Spirit spoke from God. 2 Peter 1:21 (NASB)

When it was time for Christ to arrive (Romans 5:6) the Holy Spirit came upon Mary and Christ was born (Luke 1:35-36; 2:1-7). The Apostle Peter reveals that the prophets and angels wanted to know what the Holy Spirit was revealing about Christ.

As to this salvation, the prophets who prophesied of the grace that would come to you made careful searches and inquiries, seeking to know what person or time the Spirit of Christ within them was indicating as He predicted the sufferings of Christ and the glories to follow. It was revealed to them that they were not serving themselves, but you, in these things which now have been announced to you through those who preached the gospel to you by the Holy Spirit sent from heaven—things into which angels long to look. 1 Peter 1:10-12 (NASB)

The Holy Spirit helped Jesus throughout His ministry (Luke 3:22; 4:1, 14; 10:21; Acts 1:2; 2:22; 10:38; Hebrews 9:14; 1 Peter 3:18). Hebrews 9:14 says the Holy Spirit helped Christ die on the cross, and 1 Peter 3:18 reveals the Holy Spirit helped to raise His body from the dead. This means the Holy Spirit was active among us from the creation of the world and to the time of Jesus Christ's death and resurrection.

MINISTRY OF THE HOLY SPIRIT SINCE PENTECOST. In the New Testament era and since Pentecost, the Holy Spirit now indwells those who believe in Jesus. For the first time in Scripture, we see this statement,

Now He who establishes us with you in Christ and anointed us is God, who also sealed us and gave us the Spirit in our hearts as a pledge. 2 Corinthians 1:21-22 (NASB)

This is new. The following questions reveal how He has been ministering to believers since Pentecost.

1. What does the Holy Spirit do to people according to John 16:8-10? What did He do in your life?
The Holy Spirit convicts people of sin, righteousness, and judgment.

2. How is a person born again (literally “born from above”) according to Ezekiel 36:25-27 and John 3:5-8?
Men and women are born from above because it is the Holy Spirit who gives us new life. He gives us a new heart.

3. What does the Holy Spirit do at the moment a person becomes a Christian?
 - a. Titus 3:5-6 — **The Holy Spirit regenerates and renews us at the moment of salvation.**
 - b. Ephesians 1:13-14 — **The Holy Spirit seals believers. He is a pledge of our inheritance in heaven.**
 - c. Romans 8:9 — **The Holy Spirit indwells believers.**
 - d. Romans 5:5; 15:30 — **The Holy Spirit sheds the love of God in our hearts.**
 - e. Romans 8:16; 1 John 3:24 — **The Holy Spirit gives us assurance that we belong to Christ.**
 - f. 1 Corinthians 12:11 — **The Holy Spirit gives believers spiritual gifts.**

4. At the moment a person believes in Jesus as Savior and God, the Holy Spirit also places us into the community of Christians called the “body of Christ.” This happens one time. What is this called, according to 1 Corinthians 12:13?
The “body of Christ,” which is made up of many parts. This is not a reference to speaking in tongues.

5. The Holy Spirit helps Christians in what way according to 1 Corinthians 2:12-13?
The Holy Spirit helps believers understand the Bible.

6. According to Romans 8:26-27, what does the Holy Spirit do for believers?
The Holy Spirit helps believers pray.

BEING FILLED WITH THE SPIRIT. Romans 8:9 gives us a very important truth. It says that if a person is a believer, the Holy Spirit will be indwelling him or her. Ephesians 1:13-14 refers to this as the Holy Spirit sealing the believer. But every believer needs to be empowered in the inner person by the Holy Spirit (Ephesians 3:16). Ephesians 5:17-18 tells us how we can be empowered. Those two verses tell us that it is the will of God for every believer to be filled with the Spirit. There are three

steps to being filled with the Spirit.

STEP #1: The first step to being filled with the Spirit is to regularly confess your sins to the Lord. 1 John 1:9 says that when a believer confesses their sin, the Father will forgive. When a believer sins, what happens to our relationship with the Holy Spirit according to Ephesians 4:30 and 1 Thessalonians 5:18?

We grieve the Holy Spirit when we sin. Therefore, we need to ask God to forgive our sins in order to restore our relationship.

STEP #2: The second step to being filled with the Spirit is to spend time in the study of Scripture. We discover this principle when we compare Ephesians 5:18-21 with Colossians 3:16. Colossians tells us that if we study the Word of God, we will experience what same result? One result of being filled with the Spirit and studying the Word is that there will be joy in our hearts. Name at least one more thing that will occur?

Christians will not go on sinning without being convicted of sin and wanting Jesus to be the Lord of their life.

STEP #3: The third step to being filled with the Spirit is to walk in the Spirit. (Galatians 5:16). What two things will happen to a believer who is walking in the Spirit or constantly being filled with the Spirit moment-by-moment?

a. Galatians 5:16-21 — **Believers will not be constantly pleasing the flesh. They will sin less and less.**

b. Galatians 5:22-23 — **The fruit of the Spirit will grow in the life of the believer.**

Remember it is God's will that every believer is constantly filled with the Spirit. Visit "How to Be Filled With the Spirit" for more information.

CONCLUSION. We have discovered that the Holy Spirit was present in the Old Testament and ministered to Jesus. Today He lives inside every true believer in Jesus Christ. He empowers us to live the Christian life. He is not a force but a divine person who loves us (Romans 15:30), teaches us (1 Corinthians 2:13-14), and empowers us (Ephesians 3:16). The Holy Spirit is our Helper. He is active in our world, bringing men and women to Jesus Christ. He then is active in changing our lives to become more like Jesus Christ, to be holy as God is holy (1 Peter 1:16).

Things To Ponder

1. Christian men and women sometimes doubt they really do belong to Jesus when they look at the sin in their lives and see the ugliness of their lives. How does 1 Corinthians 12:3 confirm this truth?

1 Corinthians 12:3 says that true believers will call Jesus Lord. That is, they will be obeying Christ.

2. How can a person know he/she is a Christian, according to Romans 8:15-16?

The Holy Spirit testifies with our spirit that we belong to Christ.

3. When a Christian sins (Ephesians 4:17-29) how does the Holy Spirit respond (Ephesians 4:30)? What should believers do next (1 John 1:9)?

- a. The Holy Spirit will be grieved or feel sorrow.
- b. We need to confess our sin.

4. How can we restore our relationship with the Holy Spirit (1 John 1:9)?

Believers must confess their sins.

5. What does Ephesians 3:16 reveal believers need from the Holy Spirit?

Believers need to be strengthened in the inner man.

6. What is the will of God for your life when it comes to the Holy Spirit according to Ephesians 5:17-18?

It is God's will that every believer be filled with the Spirit.

7. What does it mean to walk in the Spirit (Galatians 5:16-23)?

To walk in the Spirit refers to being filled with the Holy Spirit moment-by-moment

8. How do you know the Holy Spirit is not just an abstract power or force (Romans 15:30)?

The Holy Spirit loves believers.

The Holy Spirit

Answer true (T) or false (F) to each of the following statements:

1. The Holy Spirit is a force. F
2. The Holy Spirit is God. T
3. The Holy Spirit confirms to us that we are Christians. T
4. The Holy Spirit convicts us of sin and helps us to know the Bible. T
5. The Holy Spirit is is omniscient. T
6. God desires that we are filled with the Holy Spirit. T
7. The Holy Spirit helps us pray. T
8. The Holy Spirit is disappointed with us when we sin. T
9. The Holy Spirit is the one who selects and gives us spiritual gifts. T
10. We should be filled with the Spirit all of the time. T