

The Person of the Holy Spirit

(Compiled by Paul R. Blake from multiple sources)

Introduction: (What we can prove instead of what can be speculated upon)

- A. "There is no subject more important in religion than that of the Holy Spirit. Unless this be properly understood, a large portion of the Bible, and especially the NT, must remain unintelligible. On the other hand, a just view of it will do more than a knowledge of any other particular topic to give harmony, clearness, and consistency to what may be learned to all other matters presented in the Word of God." (The Office of the Holy Spirit, Richardson)
- B. Despite its importance to understanding the Scriptures, there is much confusion and superstition in the minds of many people about the Holy Spirit.
 - 1. A good starting place is to consider Who, not what, the Holy Spirit is.
 - 2. Is the Holy Spirit a person, One Who possesses personality?
 - 3. Or is the Holy Spirit simply an influence or an impersonal force that emanates from God?
 - 4. Jehovah's Witnesses believe "As for the 'Holy Spirit', the so-called 'third person of the trinity', we have already seen that it is, not a person, but God's active force." (The Truth That Leads To Eternal Life, Watchtower Bible & Tract Society)
 - 5. However, the Bible reveals the Holy Spirit to be an Individual Being, possessing every trait of what we call personality, and not some impersonal force that emanates from God.

I. THE HOLY SPIRIT'S WORKS MANIFEST PERSONHOOD

- A. The Holy Spirit speaks.
 - 1. He expressly says that some will depart from the faith - 1Tim. 4:1
 - 2. The Spirit spoke and gave directions to Philip - Acts 8:29
 - 3. He spoke to Peter and gave him charge concerning the Gentiles - Acts 10:19-20
 - 4. He spoke to the brethren at Antioch concerning Paul and Barnabas - Acts 13:2-4
- B. The Holy Spirit teaches.
 - 1. He was to teach the apostles all things - John 14:26
 - 2. Please note that Jesus consistently refers to the Holy Spirit as He, not it (implying a personal being, not an impersonal force) - John 14:16-17
- C. The Holy Spirit bears witness.
 - 1. He was to testify of Jesus - John 15:26-27
 - 2. Just as the apostles (who were personal beings) would bear witness, so also the Holy Spirit.
 - 3. Testifies for us - Rom. 8:16
- D. The Holy Spirit guides, hears, speaks, and tells.
 - 1. He carried on and completed the work started by Jesus - John 16:12-13
 - 2. Notice again that Jesus consistently refers to the Holy Spirit as He.

- E. The Holy Spirit forbids.
 1. He prevented Paul and his companions from going into certain areas of Asia - Acts 16:6-7
 2. By forbidding them and not permitting them despite their initial intents.
- F. The Holy Spirit intercedes.
 1. The Spirit Himself (note Paul's use of the personal pronoun) makes intercession for us - Rom. 8:26
 2. Just as Christ also makes intercession for us - Rom. 8:34

II. THE HOLY SPIRIT POSSESSES PERSONAL CHARACTERISTICS

- A. He has a mind suggesting capacity for reason - Rom. 8:27
- B. He has knowledge; he "knows the things of God" - 1Cor. 2:11
 1. Just as the "spirit of man" (a personal being) knows certain things.
- C. He possesses affection.
 1. Paul speaks of "the love of the Spirit" - Rom. 15:30
 2. When have you known of an impersonal force that could love?
- D. He has a will
 1. It was the Holy Spirit Who decided what person received which gift - 1Cor. 12:11

III. THE HOLY SPIRIT SUFFERS PERSONAL SLIGHTS AND INJURIES

- A. He can be grieved.
 1. "Do not grieve the Holy Spirit of God" - Eph. 4:30
 2. He can be made sorrowful through our willful neglect.
- B. He can be blasphemed.
 1. Attributing His deeds to the works of Satan, rejecting Him and His message - Matt. 12:31-32
- C. He can be insulted.
 1. One who has "trampled the Son of God underfoot" has also "insulted the Spirit of grace" - Heb. 10:29
 2. This is done by sinning willfully - Heb. 10:26
- D. He can be lied to - Acts 5:3
- E. He can be resisted - Acts 7:51
 1. By resisting the message and persecuting the messengers who were sent and inspired by the Holy Spirit - Acts 7:52-53

Conclusion:

- A. The Bible presents the Holy Spirit as a Personal Being.
 1. We should regard the Holy Spirit as He, not it.
- B. Have you considered your relationship to the Holy Spirit?
 1. What has He done for you in God's scheme of redemption?
 2. How does He react to your reception or rejection of the Word He has revealed?
 3. Are you guilty of resisting the Holy Spirit? - 1Peter 1:12; Acts 2:36-38