

Lesson 1

PERSON OF THE HOLY SPIRIT



Who is the Holy Spirit? It is easy for us to understand that God is our Heavenly Father, as we all have earthly fathers. And we know who Jesus is, as he was born as a baby and grew up to be a man. However it is more difficult for many Christians to understand who the Holy Spirit is. This is what we are going to learn in this lesson.

1. HE IS A PERSON

The Bible teaches us that the Holy Spirit is a person. We see this clearly in the teaching that Jesus gave in John 14 and 15. Let's see what we can learn from these chapters.

(a.) Holy Spirit is a person

When you speak about a thing, like a table, a chair or house, you will use the pronoun 'it'. However when you speak about a person you use the word 'he' or 'she'.

If you read carefully we will see that Jesus always calls the Holy Spirit, 'he', as the Holy Spirit is a person, not a thing.

John 14:16-17 *"the world cannot see **him** because it neither sees **him** or knows **him**..."*

John 16:13-14 *"when **he** comes ... **he** will guide you ... **he** will speak only what **he** hears .."*

(b.) Holy Spirit has a relationship with the Father and the Son

Jesus showed that both he and the Father have a personal relationship with the Holy Spirit. You can only have a relationship with another person.

John 14:16-17 *"I will ask the Father and he will give you another Counsellor to be with you forever."*

Jesus had been a Counsellor to his disciples, but now he was leaving and so he promised to send another. The word 'another' means 'someone else exactly like him.'

John 14:26 *"But the Counsellor, the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in my name, will teach you all things ..."*

We can see there is a close relationship between the Father, Son and Holy Spirit. Clearly he is a person, not just a power or a force.

(c.) Holy Spirit can have a relationship with us

If the Holy Spirit is a person then he can also have a relationship with men and women.

John 14:17b *"But you know him (the Holy Spirit), for he lives with you and will be in you."*

'with you' While Jesus was on earth the disciples knew the Holy Spirit as he was living in Jesus, so he was with them.

'in you' Jesus promised that one day the Holy Spirit would be in them, just as he was in him.

It was only 50 days later that the Holy Spirit came and the disciples experienced what Jesus had promised on the Day of Pentecost. The Holy Spirit came and dwelt in them, enabling them to have a closer, continuing relationship with God.

(d.) Holy Spirit is a person with power

As we have seen the Holy Spirit is not a power, but he is a person with power. See Luke 1:35, 4:14

Acts 10:38 *“God anointed Jesus of Nazareth with the Holy Spirit and power.”*

Romans 15:13 *“.. so that you may overflow with hope by the power of the Holy Spirit.”*

Example: we say a ‘sack of rice’ which means the sack is full of rice. When we say the power of the Holy Spirit it means that the Holy Spirit is full of power or he has power.

(e.) Holy Spirit is a person who thinks, feels and wills

We can also see from the Bible that the Holy Spirit responds like a person. We can grieve him and hinder him from working in our lives. This means it is very important how we treat the Holy Spirit.

Ephesians 4:30 *“Do not grieve the Holy Spirit of God.”*

1 Thessalonians 5:19-20 *“.. do not put out the Spirit’s fire; do not treat prophecies with contempt.”*

2. HE IS GOD

Not only is the Holy Spirit a person, but he is God. We call him the third person of the Godhead. This does not mean that he is less important, but rather that he was revealed to us after the Lord Jesus Christ. Let us see from the Bible how we know that he is God.

(a.) Holy Spirit does the same things as God does

Holy Spirit creates

Genesis 1:1-2 *“In the beginning God created ... and the Spirit of God was hovering over the waters.”*

Job 33:4 *“The Spirit of God has made me; the breath of the Almighty gives me life.”*

Holy Spirit inspires

2 Peter 1:21 *“.. men spoke from God as they were carried along by the Holy Spirit.”*

Also see Acts 1:16, 2 Timothy 3:16

Holy Spirit regenerates

John 3:5 *“No-one can enter the Kingdom of God unless he is born of water and the Spirit”*

(b.) Holy Spirit has the same names as God does

Jesus uses 3 different names for the Holy Spirit in John 14. These names were also given to Jesus and God.

Counsellor **John 14:16, 26**

Counsellor means helper, comforter, someone called alongside to help. When someone was accused in court they would invite a counsellor or a friend to help them. This is the meaning of 'counsellor.' The Holy Spirit came to take Jesus' place when he ascended into Heaven, to support us when we are weak, counsel us in difficulties and comfort us in affliction.

Spirit of Truth **John 14:17, 16:13**

Only God is truth. Jesus declared that he is 'the Truth'. Now Jesus is calling the Holy Spirit, the Spirit of Truth. This shows us clearly that Jesus is placing him on the same level as God. He is given this name as he teaches us the truth about God and helps us understand the truths in God's Word.

Holy Spirit **John 14:26**

Only God is holy, so when Jesus calls the Spirit, Holy Spirit, he is showing us that he is equal to God. This means we need to reverence and love the Holy Spirit, just as we do the Father and the Son.

There are other names given to the Holy Spirit in the Bible that also show us He is God. For example in Isaiah 61:1 it calls him the 'Spirit of the Lord God' and in 2 Corinthians 3:3 it calls him the 'Spirit of the Living God.'

(c.) Holy Spirit has divine qualities

Already we have seen several qualities of the Holy Spirit – that he is holy and he is the truth. Here are some other qualities that show us he is God.

<u>He is everywhere</u>	Psalm 139:7-11	<i>"Where can I go from your Spirit.."</i>
<u>He has all power</u>	Romans 15:19	<i>"..by the power of signs and miracles, through the power of the Spirit."</i>
<u>He knows all things</u>	1 Corinthians 2:10	<i>"The Spirit searches all things, even the deep things of God."</i>
<u>He is sovereign</u>	1 Corinthians 12:11	<i>The Holy Spirit gives gifts as he wants to.</i>

(d.) Holy Spirit is given honour

In the Word of God we see that the Holy Spirit is honoured, just as God is.

To lie to the Holy Spirit is to lie to God	Acts 5:3-5
To obey the Holy Spirit is to obey God	Galatians 5:16-24
To blaspheme the Holy Spirit is a serious sin	Mark 3:28-29

Conclusion

When Jesus promised that He would send the Holy Spirit, he was saying that God would be present with us. The Holy Spirit is God, not separate from the Father or Jesus, but together with them. This is what Jesus said would happen when we receive the Holy Spirit in John 14:20: "On that day you will realise that I am in my Father, and you are in me and I am in you." The presence of the Holy Spirit in our lives means the presence of the Father and the Son. Isn't that wonderful! We have God living inside of us.