



GRACE

REFORMED BAPTIST CHURCH

SOLI ♦ DEO ♦ GLORIA

THE GOSPEL OF JOHN

Sermon Notes

The Person of the Holy Spirit, Part I

The Holy Spirit is a PERSON

John 16:5-15

May 21, 2006

BACKGROUND

- There is likely more confusion concerning the Holy Spirit than any other Person of the Trinity.
- There are three primary tenets of the Doctrine of the Trinity that we have analyzed:

“Within the One Being that is God, there exists eternally three coequal and coeternal persons, namely, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit.” James White, *The Forgotten Trinity*

1. There is One God
2. There are Three Persons within the one Being that is God
3. The Three Persons are Coequal and Coeternal

- Before studying the Person of the Holy Spirit, let us remember that we worship God for two primary reasons: For... (1) **Who He is**; and (2) **What He has done**.
- Therefore, our study of the Holy Spirit will seek to answer these two questions.
- However, before we can understand what He has done, we must first know and understand who He is. The reason for this is that **it is because of who He is that He does what He does**.

- There are four primary points one must understand when seeking to answer the first of the two above questions:
 1. *What* the Holy Spirit is NOT...He is NOT a Force or impersonal Power, Influence, or Energy.
 2. WHO the Holy Spirit IS...He IS a PERSON.
 3. He is also a DIVINE PESON...He is FULLY God.
 4. Why is this important?

I. **The Holy Spirit is NOT a Force or Impersonal Power, Influence, or Energy.**

- It is rather easy to view the Father and the Son as persons, as they possess titles which indicate Personhood. Yet, the titles “Holy Spirit” or [even more confusing] “Holy Ghost” are often understood to indicate something less ‘tangible’ or personal than that Father and the Son.
- Acts 10:37-38: “you yourselves know the thing which took place throughout all Judea, starting from Galilee, after the baptism which John proclaimed. You know of Jesus of Nazareth, how God anointed Him with **the Holy Spirit and with power**, and how He went about doing good and healing all who were oppressed by the devil, for **God was with Him.**”
- 1 Corinthians 2:1-4: “And when I came to you, brethren, I did not come with superiority of speech or of wisdom, proclaiming to you the testimony of God. For I determined to know nothing among you except Jesus Christ, and Him crucified. I was with you in weakness and in fear and in much trembling, and my message and my preaching were not in persuasive words of wisdom, but in demonstration of **the Spirit and of power...**”
- **Therefore, we must properly refer to the Holy Spirit as “He” NOT “It.”**

II. **The Holy Spirit is a PERSON**

- It is at this level where the vast majority of errors concerning the Holy Spirit occur.
 - In other words, the abuses we observe in not only in charismatic circles (emphasis on signs, wonders, and experience), but also in more Reformed circles (a basic ignorance and even avoidance of the Holy Spirit), each stem, I believe, from a misunderstanding of this fundamental point: **the Holy Spirit is a Person.**
 - Yet, the question exists: Since the Bible does not explicitly say, “The Holy Spirit is a Person,” what does this mean?
 - NOTE: There is nothing “sacred” about the word “Person” with respect to the Holy Spirit, but it is the best word to describe Him. The reasons for this will be made clear.
- The Holy Spirit is a Person, as He possesses Personality distinct from the Father and the Son. In other words, the Bible ascribes personal pronouns, personal properties and personal activities to the Holy Spirit.
1. **The Scriptures refer to the Holy Spirit by using Personal Pronouns.**

- John 14:16-17: “I will ask the Father, and He will give you another Helper, that **He** may be with you forever...you know **Him** because **He** abides with you and will be in you.”

⇒ NOTE: the word in the Greek for *another* is *allos*, αλλος, meaning “another of the same kind”; as opposed to *heteros*, ετερος, meaning “another of a different kind.”

- John 15:26: “When the Helper [Paraclete] comes...**He** will testify about Me.”
- John 16:13-14: “But when **He**, the Spirit of truth, comes, **He** will guide you into all the truth; for **He** ...”
- Acts 10:19-20: “While Peter was reflecting on the vision, the Spirit said to him, “...**I** have sent them **Myself**.”
- Acts 11:12
- Acts 13:2

2. The Scriptures ascribe Personal Properties to the Holy Spirit.

- **Intelligence** (John 14:26; John 15:26; Romans 8:16)
- **Understanding** or **Wisdom** (Isaiah 11:2; 1 Corinthians 2:10-11)
- **Power** (Isaiah 11:2; Micah 3:8; Acts 10:38; Romans 15:13; Ephesians 3:16)
- **Affections** (Isaiah 63:10; Ephesians 4:30)
- **Will** (1 Corinthians 12:11; John 3:8; Acts 16:7)

1 Corinthians 12:11: “But one and the same Spirit works all these things, distributing to each one individually **just as He wills**.”

John 3:8: “The wind blows where it wishes and you hear the sound of it, but do not know where it comes from and where it is going; so is everyone who is born of the Spirit.”

Acts 16:7: “and after they came to Mysia, they were trying to go into Bithynia, and **the Spirit of Jesus did not permit them**...”

⇒ In other words, as fully God, the Spirit is fully sovereign.

- **Purpose**
 - ⇒ This is, in my opinion, possibly the strongest evidence for *Particular Redemption*. The Holy Spirit is not an impersonal, indiscriminate force in salvation. Rather, He intentionally quickens those whom the Father chose [before the foundation of the world] and for whom the Son died.

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3. The Scriptures ascribe Personal Activities to the Holy Spirit.

- **He Speaks** (Mark 13:11b; Acts 13:2; 21:11; 1 Timothy 4:1; Hebrews 3:7; 10:15)
- **He Reveals** (Luke 2:26; 1 Peter 1:11)
- **He Guides** [into all truth] (John 16:13)
- **He Teaches** (Luke 12:12; John 14:26)
- **He Comforts, Counsels, Helps, and Loves the Believer** (John 14:16, 26; 15:26; 16:7; Romans 15:30; James 4:5)
- **He Encourages** (Acts 9:31)
- **He Warns** (1 Timothy 4:1)
- **He Appoints to Office** (Acts 13:2; 20:28)
- **He is Grieved** (Isaiah 63:10)
- **He May be Lied to** (Acts 5:3)
- **He May be Blasphemed** (Matthew 12:31-32)

III. The Holy Spirit is a DIVINE Person...He is FULLY God.

1. He is referred to as God. (Acts 5:3-4)

Acts 5:3-4: “But Peter said, “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.**”

2. He is identified as the Yahweh of the Old Testament

- **Isaiah 6:9-10** and **Acts 28:25-27**

Isaiah 6:8-10: “Then I heard the voice of the Lord, saying...He said, ‘Go and tell this people...’”

Acts 28:25-27: “... ‘The Holy Spirit rightly spoke through Isaiah the prophet to your fathers, saying...[direct quote from Isaiah 6:9-10]’”

- **Psalms 95:7-11** and **Hebrews 3:7-9**

Psalms 95:7-11: “For He is our God...Today, if you would hear His voice... “When your fathers tested Me, They tried Me, though they had seen My work...”

Hebrews 3:7-9: “Therefore, just as **the Holy Spirit says**, “**Today, if You hear His voice**, Do not harden your hearts as when they provoked Me, as in the day of trial in the wilderness, **where your fathers tried Me by testing Me...**”

- Leviticus 26:11-12 prophesies Yahweh’s “dwelling with His people” and the Apostle Paul cites this passage in 2 Corinthians 6:16.
- 1 Corinthians 3:16 and 1 Corinthians 6:19.

1 Corinthians 3:16: “Do you not know that you are a **temple of God** and that the Spirit of God dwells in you?”

1 Corinthians 6:19: “Or do you not know that your body is a **temple of the Holy Spirit** who is in you...”

⇒ In other words, being a temple of God is the same thing as being a temple of the Holy Spirit because **the Holy Spirit IS God**.

3. He is equal with the Father and the Son in the Trinitarian Passages of the New Testament.

- Matthew 3:16; 28:19

⇒ NOTE: In Matthew 28:19, the Holy Spirit is included, with the Father and the Son, under the ONE divine Name [singular in the Greek].

Matthew 28:19: “Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in **the name** [SINGULAR] of the **Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit** [PLURAL].”

- 1 Corinthians 12:4-6
- 2 Corinthians 13:14
- Ephesians 2:18
- Ephesians 4:4-6
- 1 Peter 1:2

4. The Holy Spirit is fully God because He possesses divine attributes.

- He is Eternal (Hebrews 9:14; John 14:16)
- He is Omnipresent (Psalm 139:7-10)
- He is Omnipotent (Psalm 104:30; Romans 15:19)
- He is Omniscient (Isaiah 40:13-14; 1 Corinthians 2:10-11)
- He is Sovereign (John 3:8)

5. He comes [proceeds] from the Father and is sent by the Father and the Son

- John 15:26
- John 16:7; 14:18; 14:26
- Acts 2:33; 16:7
- Romans 8:9-10

6. Therefore, He performs divine works.

* Discussed Next Week

IV. Why is this Important?

1. The Holy Spirit, as a Divine Person, has Divine Purpose [which is perfectly consistent with the Persons of the Father and the Son].
2. Because the Holy Spirit is a Person, we can have a personal relationship with Him. In other words, we can and should pray to Him.
3. As a DIVINE Person, the Holy Spirit is worthy of all the Honor and Worship as the Father and the Son. It is, therefore, appropriate to worship Him.
4. Because of the Holy Spirit, God is truly with us.