

The Holy Spirit

by J. T. Smith

Editor's Note — With this issue I begin a series of articles on the Holy Spirit. In this series we will discuss (1) Some Interesting Facts About the Holy Spirit, (2) The Holy Spirit and the Inspired Word, (3) The Holy Spirit and Conversion, (4) The Holy Spirit and Miracles, (5) The Gift and Indwelling of the Holy Spirit, (6) Blasphemy of the Holy Spirit.

Several years ago I made a study of this subject. Since that time I have tried to improve my knowledge with further study. I am not going to try to mention all the sources from which I gathered material. Instead, I will simply say that whatever good may be gained from our studies, all glory and praise be to God.

I am not so naïve as to think that everyone who reads these articles will agree with everything I set forth in them. I hope, however, that you will at least consider the things that are said. Perhaps something will be said that will prompt you to make a further and deeper study.

The Holy Spirit – Who Is He?

It is certainly a thrill to be able to search the Scriptures to learn what God has revealed about the Holy Spirit. God and His works are revealed in a number of ways. In fact David said, “The heavens declare the glory of God; and the firmament shows His handiwork. Day unto day utters speech, and night unto night reveals knowledge” (Psalm 19:1-2). But we learn about man, Christ, sin, salvation, damnation, The Holy Spirit and many other subjects through only one source — The Bible.

There are several different names given to the Holy Spirit in both the Old and New Testaments. He is mentioned by eighteen different names in the Old Testament, by thirty-nine in the New. This makes a total of fifty-two. Seventeen of them refer to the Spirit's relationship to God the Father. Five refer to His relationship to the Lord Jesus Christ. Five refer especially to the Spirit's divine nature. Seven describe the character, and seventeen show the Spirit's relationship to man. One refers to His peculiar relationship to the apostles. Generally He is called – Holy Spirit, The Spirit, Spirit of God, Spirit of Christ, Spirit of the Lord, Spirit of Jesus, Spirit of truth, Spirit of grace, Spirit of Glory and Comforter. It might be noted that The Spirit is not a glorified “IT.” He is a *person* having a distinct personality just as the other members of the Godhead have personalities. It is imperative that we discuss the Godhead in connection with this introductory lesson.

Easy to Believe – Difficult to Fully Understand

This subject is easier believed than fully understood. Job said in Job 11:7-9, “Can you search out the deep things of God? Can you find out the limits of the Almighty? They are higher than heaven – what can you do? Deeper than Sheol – what can you know? Their measure is longer than the earth and broader than the sea.” So, man, with his finite mind, is unable to understand all that there is to know about God. He is past finding out in His completeness. All we have to go on with reference to God, is the information that He has revealed about Himself. “But God has revealed them to us through His Spirit. For the Spirit searches all things, yes, the deep things of God. For what man knows the things of a man except the spirit of the man which is in him? Even so no one knows the things of God except the Spirit of God” (I Corinthians 2:10-11).

The Word Godhead

The word “Godhead” is a form of the word “Godhood” and is used three times in the King James Version of the New Testament (Acts 17:29; Romans 1:20; Colossians 2:9). In the New King James Version, the word is translated “Divine Nature” in Acts 17:29; and “Godhead,” in Romans 1:20 and Colossians 2:9 The root word in the Greek from

which these words are translated is *theios* (theios). The word “divinity” or “divine nature” denotes the “quality or state of being God; the sum total of attributes or characteristics that are common with deity.” Frequently, the term “God” is used in the sense of “Godhood” or “Deity.” The Scriptures reveal a plurality of beings in the “Godhead.”

Three Persons In The Godhead

In the New Testament there are three who make up the “God Family” and possess the qualities and characteristics of divinity. They are all referred to as “God” – Father, Son, Holy Spirit. “For there are three that bear witness in heaven: the Father, the Word, and the Holy Spirit; and these three are one” (I John 5:7). Because of the word “one,” some have tried to force a meaning on this text that is unwarranted. By it they try to prove that there is “just *one person* in the Godhead.” But they misapply the reading of the passage when they do so. The passage doesn’t say “this one is three,” it says “these three are one.” They are one in the same sense that this expression is used in John 17:20-22. “I do not pray for these alone, but also for those who will believe in Me through their word; that they all may be one, as You, Father, are in Me, and I in You; that they also may be one in Us, that the world may believe that You sent Me. And the glory which You gave Me I have given them, that they may be one just as We are one.” Obviously, all persons who become Christians do not cease being individuals. They are still separate persons though they are one in Christ. We also find this same kind of expression in Matthew 19:5-6 when Jesus speaks of the man and woman becoming “one flesh” in marriage. They are still “two persons” though they are “one.”

Paul says there is one God who is Father – Ephesians 4:6 “One God and Father of all, who is above all, and through all, and in you all.”

The Hebrew writer says that the Father addressed the Son as “God.” “But to the Son He says: ‘Your throne, O God, is forever and ever; a scepter of righteousness is the scepter of Your Kingdom’.” (Hebrews 1:8). “In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God” (John 1:1)

When Ananias and Sapphira lied about the price of a piece of land they sold, Peter said, “Ananias, why has Satan filled your heart to lie to the Holy Spirit and keep back part of the price of the land for yourself? While it remained, was it not your own? And after it was sold, was it not in your own control? Why have you conceived this thing in your heart? You have not lied to men but to God” (Acts 5:3-4). So, Peter said Ananias lied to the Holy Spirit – but when he lied to the Holy Spirit he lied unto God – showing beyond doubt that the Holy Spirit also possesses the qualities and characteristics of deity.

Material Creation

The Bible says “The earth was without form, and void; and darkness was on the face of the deep. And the Spirit of God was hovering over the face of the waters” (Genesis 1:2). The Spirit’s work was to produce order and beauty out of the chaos that existed at that time. Job said, “By His Spirit He adorned the heavens; . . .” (Job 26:13).

Spiritual Creation

Christ promised to set up a spiritual kingdom. In Mark 9:1 He said, “Assuredly, I say to you that there are some standing here who will not taste death till they see the kingdom of God present with power.” In Acts 1:8 Christ makes His Apostles aware of the fact that the “power” would come on the first Pentecost after His resurrection. “But you shall receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you; and you shall be witnesses to Me in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the end of the earth.” Hence, the Holy Spirit organized the material and sent it forth by the mouths of the Apostles. In Acts 2 He convinced the people – by the miracles the Apostles performed – that God was using the Apostles to establish Christ’s kingdom. He also convinced them by showing that what

was happening was a fulfillment of Joel's and David's teachings. Thus we observe the Spirit's part in the establishing of Christ's kingdom, church, body. (Acts 2:47 cf. Ephesians 1:22-23).

These are just a few of the facts that we thought would be interesting to you with reference to the third person in the Godhead – The Holy Spirit.

Our next study will be "The Holy Spirit and the Inspired Word."