

THE HOLY SPIRIT - HIS NATURE AND HIS WORK

I. INTRODUCTION

- A. The Old Testament refers to the Holy Spirit 88 times.
1. 18 different names are given to the Holy Spirit in the Old Testament.
- B. The New Testament refers to the Holy Spirit 264 times.
1. 39 names are given to Him in the New Testament.
 - (a) 5 names are common to both Testaments.
 - (b) Therefore, 52 different names in the whole Bible.
- C. The Holy Spirit is referred to as a Person (HE).
1. John 16:13-14 "Howbeit when He, the Spirit of truth, is come, He will guide you into all truth: for He shall not speak of himself; but whatsoever He shall hear, that shall He speak: and He will shew you things to come."

II. THE BIBLE TEACHES THE TRI-UNITY OF GOD.

- A. Firstly, the Godhead is mentioned in three different places.
1. Acts 17:29 ΤΟ ΘΕΙΟΝ "Forasmuch then as we are the offspring of God, we ought not to think that the Godhead is like unto gold or silver, or stone, graven by art and man's device."
 2. Romans 1:20 ΘΕΙΟΤΗΣ "For the invisible things of Him from the creation of the world are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made, even His eternal power and Godhead; so that they are without excuse."
 3. Col. 2:9 ΘΕΟΤΗΤΟΣ "For in Him dwelleth all the fullness of the Godhead bodily."
- B. Secondly, Scriptures denote three separate personalities.
1. John 14:26 "But the Comforter, which is the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in my name, He shall teach you all things, and bring all things to your remembrance, whatsoever I have said unto you."
 2. Matthew 3:16-17 "And Jesus, when He was baptized, went up straightway out of the water: and, lo, the heavens were opened unto Him, and He saw the Spirit of God descending like a dove, and lighting upon Him: and, lo, a voice from heaven, saying, This is my beloved Son in whom I am well pleased."
 3. Matthew 28:18-19 "And Jesus came and spake unto them, saying, All power is given unto me in heaven and in earth. Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit."

And I believe in the Holy Spirit, The Lord, and Giver of Life, Who Proceedeth from the Father and the Son: Who with the Father and the Son together is worshipped and glorified; Who spake by the Prophets: And I believe in one Catholic and Apostolic Church: I acknowledge one baptism for the remission of sins: And I look for the Resurrection of the dead: and the life of the world to come. Amen."

3. The Athanasius Creed (Formulated in the 5th Century - It could not have been written by Athanasius.)

"This is the Catholic Faith: That we worship one God in trinity, and trinity in unity; neither confounding the persons; nor dividing the substance ...
In this Trinity none is before or after another: none is greater or less than another. But the whole three Persons are co-eternal together, and co-equal."

4. Martin Luther: "In the Godhead, the entire divine nature and essence passes into the Son: yet the son, who remains in the same Godhead with the Father, is one God together with Him. Likewise, the Holy Spirit partakes of the same divine nature with the Father and the Son This must be accepted by faith. No matter how clever, acute, and keen reason may be, it will never grasp and comprehend it. If it were susceptible to our wisdom, then God would not need to reveal it from heaven or proclaim it through the Holy Scripture. So be governed by this fact and say: "I believe and confess that there is one eternal God and, at the same time, three distinct Persons, even though I cannot fathom and comprehend this. For Holy Scripture, which is God's word, says so; and I abide by what it states." Luther's Works (St. Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 1957) XXII,6.
5. John Calvin: "I am exceeding pleased with this observation of Gregory Nazianzen. I cannot think of the ONE, but I am immediately surrounded with the splendor of the THREE, nor can I clearly discover the THREE, but I am carried back to the ONE. Wherefore, let us not imagine such a trinity of Persons, as includes an idea of separation, or does not immediately recall us to the unity. The names of Father, Son and Spirit, certainly imply a real distinction; let no one suppose them to be mere epithets, by which God is variously designated from his works; but it is a distinction, not a division." Institutes of the Christian Religion, Ch. 13:17.

D. In the fourth place: Creation is credited to all members of the Godhead.

1. Jeremiah 51:15 "He hath made the earth by his power, he hath established the world by his wisdom, and hath stretched out the heaven by his understanding." (Speaking of God the Father).

2. John 1:1-3 "In the beginning was the Word and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. The same was in the beginning with God. All things were made by him: and without him was not anything made that was made."
3. Col. 1:16-17 "For by him were all things created, that are in heaven, and that are in earth, visible and invisible, whether they be thrones, or dominions, or principalities, or powers: all things were created by him, and for him: and he is before all things and by him all things consist."
4. Hebrews 1:2 "Hath in these last days spoken unto us by his Son, whom he hath appointed heir of all things, by whom also he made the worlds."
5. I. Cor. 8:6 "But to us there is but one God, the Father, of whom are all things, and we in him: and One Lord Jesus Christ, by whom are all things, and we by him."
6. Genesis 1:2 "And the earth was without form, and void; and darkness was upon the face of the deep. And the Spirit of God moved upon the face of the waters."

E. Fifthly: The Apostle Paul shows the intimate yet distinct relationship in Godhead.

1. I Cor. 2:10-11 "But God hath revealed them unto us by his Spirit: for the Spirit searcheth all things, yea, the deep things of God. For what man knoweth the things of a man, save the spirit of man which is in him? Even so the things of God knoweth no man, but the Spirit of God."
 - (a) Bowie says, "It is not merely God's breath, but his self-awareness, his mind, his inner being. This may be the source or seat of God's vitality, but it is more. It is his self-consciousness, his very being, the center of his "person", as we might say. Just as a man's spirit is his ultimate reality, when he is stripped of all that is accidental to his being, so God's Spirit is his inner self. Spirit therefore contrasts with Christ, insofar as the latter is God's image, while the former is his inner being." Jesus and the Trinity, p. 61.
2. Romans 8:26-27 "Likewise the Spirit also helpeth our infirmities: for we know not what we should pray for as we ought: but the Spirit itself maketh intercession for us with groanings which cannot be uttered. And he that searcheth the hearts knoweth what is the mind of the Spirit, because he maketh intercession for the saints according to the will of God."
 - (a) Bowie says again, "There is no way to draw together these two diverse themes in Paul. In one, the Spirit is identical with God's being, in the other, he stands over against it... So

Paul's thought can never be tied up in one neat systematic package." Ibid. p. 62.

III. WHAT ARE THE FUNCTIONS AND THE WORKS OF THE HOLY SPIRIT?

A. Firstly, He assisted in the Creation.

1. Genesis 1:1-2 "In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth. And the earth was without form, and void; and darkness was upon the face of the deep. And the Spirit of God moved upon the face of the waters."

B. Secondly, He had a vital part in the Virgin Birth of Christ.

1. Luke 1:34-35 "Then said Mary unto the angel, How shall this be, seeing I know not a man? And the angel answered and said unto her, The Holy Spirit shall come upon thee, and the power of the Highest shall over-shadow thee: therefore also that holy thing which shall be born of thee shall be called the Son of God."
2. Matthew 1:20 "But while he thought on these things, behold, the angel of the Lord appeared unto him in a dream saying, Joseph, thou son of David, fear not to take unto thee Mary thy wife: for that which is conceived in her is of the Holy Spirit."

C. In the third place, The Holy Spirit guided men in revealing the truth of God.

1. This kept the message free from error.
2. 2 Peter 1:21 "For the prophecy came not in old time by the will of man: but holy men of God spake as they were moved by the Holy Spirit."
3. There are numerous Old Testament examples:
 - (a) Isa. 61:1 "The Spirit of the Lord God is upon me; because the Lord hath anointed me to preach good tidings unto the meek; he hath sent me to bind up the broken hearted, to proclaim liberty to the captives"
 - (b) I Sam. 10:6 Samuel speaking to Saul, "And the Spirit of the Lord will come upon thee, and thou shalt prophesy with them, and shall be turned into another man."
 - (c) Acts 28:25 "And when they agreed not among themselves, they departed after that Paul had spoken one word, Well spake the Holy Spirit by Esaias the prophet unto our fathers...."
 - (d) Ezekiel 11:5 "And the Spirit of the Lord fell upon me, and said unto me, Speak; Thus saith the Lord; Thus have ye said, O house of Israel: for I know the things that come unto your mind, every one of you."

- (e) Numbers 11:25 "And the Lord came down in a cloud, and spake unto him, and took of the spirit that was upon him, and gave it unto the seventy elders: and it came to pass, that when the spirit rested upon them, they prophesied, and did not cease."

4. There are numerous examples in the New Testament of the Spirit Guiding:

- (a) Mark 12:36 "For David himself said by the Holy Spirit, the Lord said to my Lord, Sit thou on my right hand, till I make thine enemies thy footstool."
- (b) Mark 13:11 "But when they shall lead you, and deliver you up, take no thought beforehand what ye shall speak, neither do ye premeditate; but whatsoever shall be given you in that hour, that speak, for it is not ye that speak, but the Holy Spirit."
- (c) I Cor. 2:10-13 "Which things also we speak, not in the words which man's wisdom teacheth, but which the Holy Spirit teacheth; comparing spiritual things with spiritual."
- (d) Hebrews 10:15 "Whereof the Holy Spirit also is a witness to us: for after that he had said before, This is the covenant that I will make with them after those days"
- (e) I Tim. 4:1 "The Spirit saith expressly that in the latter times some shall depart from the faith"
- (f) Acts 2:4 "and they began to speak with other languages as the Spirit gave them utterance."
- (g) I Thess. 1:5 "For our gospel came not unto you in word only, but also in power, and in the Holy Spirit, and in much assurance; as ye know what manner of men who were among you for your sake..."
- (h) Acts 8:29 "Then the Spirit saith unto Philip, Go near, and join thyself to this chariot."

D. Fourthly, The Holy Spirit distributed certain miraculous gifts to the early church.

1. I Corinthians 12:7-12 "But the manifestation of the Spirit is given to each one for the profit of all: For to one is given by the Spirit the word of wisdom; to another the word of knowledge by the same Spirit; To another faith by the same Spirit; to another the gifts of healing by the same Spirit; To another the working of miracles; to another prophecy; to another discerning of spirits; to another divers kinds of tongues (languages); to another the interpretation of tongues. But all these worketh that one and self-same Spirit, dividing to every man severally as he will."

NOTE: These early gifts (helps) were needed in the early period before the New Testament was written down. They ceased afterwards.

E. Fifthly, the fruits of the Spirit are listed in Galatians 5:19-

1. Galatians 5:22-23 "But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, temperance: against such there is no law."
2. Another Fruit is Unity.
 - (a) Eph. 4:1-3 I therefore, the prisoner of the Lord, beseech you that ye walk worthy of the vocation wherewith ye are called, with all lowliness and meekness, with longsuffering, forbearing one another in love, endeavoring to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace."
 - (b) Psalms 133 "Behold, how good and how pleasant it is for brethren to dwell together in unity. It is like the precious ointment upon the head, that ran down upon the beard, even Aaron's beard: that went down to the skirts of his garments, and the dew of Hermon, and as the dew that descended upon the mountains of Zion: for there the Lord commanded the blessing even life for evermore."

F. In the sixth place, the Holy Spirit is given in measures:

1. Christ had the Spirit Without Measure.
 - (a) John 3:34 "For he whom God hath sent speaketh the words of God: for God giveth not the Spirit by measure unto him."
2. The Baptismal Measure:
 - (a) Acts 2:4 "And they were all filled with the Holy Spirit, and began to speak with other tongues, as the Spirit gave them utterance."
 - (i) The Apostles on Pentecost.
 - (b) Acts 11:15-16 "And as I began to speak, the Holy Spirit fell on them as on us at the beginning. Then remembered I the word of the Lord, how that he said, John indeed baptized with water; but ye shall be baptized with the Holy Spirit."
 - (i) Household of Cornelius. (These are the only two cases on record.)
3. The In-dwelling of the Holy Spirit.
 - (a) John 7:39 "But this spake he of the Spirit, which they that believe on him should receive;

for the Holy Spirit was not yet given; because that Jesus was not yet glorified."

- (b) Acts 5:32 And we are his witnesses of these things; and so is also the Holy Spirit, whom God hath given to them that obey Him."
- (c) I Cor. 6:19 "Know ye not that your body is the temple of the Holy Spirit which is in you, which ye have of God, and ye are not your own."
- (d) Galatians 4:6 "And because ye are sons, God hath sent forth the Spirit of His Son into your hearts, crying Abba, Father."

NOTE: No one can receive the Holy Spirit and reject His teachings.

G. What is the work of the Holy Spirit in Conversion?

1. Firstly, The Holy Spirit guided the Apostles into all truth.

- (a) John 14:25-26 "These things I have spoken to you while being present with you. But the Helper, the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in My name, He will teach you all things, and bring to your remembrance all things that I said to you."
- (b) John 26:12-15 "I still have many things to say to you, but you cannot bear them now. However, when He, the Spirit of truth, has come, He will guide you into all truth; for He will not speak on His own authority, but whatever He hears He will speak; and He will tell you things to come. He will glorify Me, for He will take of what is Mine and declare it to you. All things that the Father has are Mine. Therefore I said that He will take of Mine and declare it to you."

Examples:

- 1. Peter on Pentecost (Acts. 2:4)
- 2. Philip joining the Eunuch (Acts 8:29)
- 3. Peter to Cornelius' household (Acts 10:19)

2. Work in Conversion seen in figure of the New Birth.

- (a) John 3:1-8 "There was a man of the Pharisees, named Nicodemus, a ruler of the Jews: The same came to Jesus by night, and said unto him, Rabbi, we know that thou art a teacher come from God: for no man can do these miracles that thou doest, except God be with him. Jesus answered and said unto him, Verily, verily, I say unto thee, Except a man be born again he cannot see the kingdom of God. Nicodemus saith not him, How can a man be born when he is old? Can he enter the second

time into his mother's womb, and be born? Jesus answered, Verily, verily, I say unto thee, Except a man be born of water and of the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God. ... That which is born of flesh is flesh, and that which is born of Spirit is Spirit."

(b) Two things are Necessary for a Birth:

- (i) A Begetting:
- (ii) A Delivery.

(c) The Holy Spirit plants the Seed (Word of God) into the Heart.

- (i) Luke 8:11 "Now the parable is this: The seed is the word of God."
- (ii) I Cor. 4:15 "For though ye have ten thousand instructors in Christ, yet have ye not many fathers: for in Christ Jesus I have begotten you through the gospel."
- (iii) James 1:18 "Of His own will beget he us with the word of truth, that we should be a kind of firstfruits of his creatures."
- (iv) I Peter 1:23-25 "Being born again, not of corruptible seed, but of incorruptible, by the word of God, which liveth and abideth for ever."

(d) The Holy Spirit convicts sinners of sin.

- (i) John 16:8 "And when He is come, He will reprove the world of sin, and of righteousness, and of judgment."
- (ii) The sword of the Spirit is the Word of God.
 - a. Eph. 6:17 "And take the helmet of salvation, and the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God."
 - b. Acts 2:27 "And when they heard this they were pricked in their hearts and said men and brethren what shall we do."

(1) They were pricked by the words of Peter.

(e) Thus, these are the steps in Conversion:

- (1) The Holy Spirit acting through the Word convicts a sinner.
- (2) This seed (the Word of God) is planted in his heart.
- (3) There is a period of gestation - of decision.

(*) Then there is a delivery - from one condition to another.

a. Baptism is the delivery of the new birth.

- (1) Rom. 6:3-4, 18 "Or do you not know that as many of us as were baptized into Christ Jesus were baptized into His death? Therefore we were buried with Him through baptism into death, that just as Christ was raised from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life. ... And having been set free from sin, you became slaves of righteousness.
- (2) Gal. 3:27 "For as many of you as were baptized into Christ have put on Christ."
- (3) 2 Cor. 5:17 "Therefore if any man be in Christ, he is a new creature: old things are passed away; behold all things have become new."
- (4) I Cor. 12:13 "For by one Spirit are we all baptized into one body, whether we be Jews or Gentiles, whether we be bond or free; and have been all made to drink into one Spirit."

NOTE: The entire process of conversion is directed and accomplished by the Holy Spirit.

IV. IT IS POSSIBLE TO SIN AGAINST THE HOLY SPIRIT.

- A. There is a sense in which all sin is against each member of the Godhead.
- B. However, it is possible to sin specifically against the Holy Spirit.
 1. Acts 7:51 "...Ye do always resist the Holy Spirit; as your fathers did, so do ye."
 2. Acts 5:3 "But Peter said, Ananias, why hath Satan filled thine heart to lie to the Holy Spirit."
 3. Eph. 4:30 "And grieve not the Holy Spirit of God whereby ye are sealed."
 4. I Thess. 5:17-19 "... quench not the Spirit."
 5. Hebrews 10:26-29 "Of how much sorer punishment, suppose ye, shall he be thought worthy, who hath trodden under the foot of the Son of God, and hath

counted the blood of the covenant, wherewith he was sanctified an unholy thing, and hath done despite (gave insult to) the Spirit of God.

6. Blasphemy against the Holy Spirit.

- (a) Matthew 12:31-32 "Wherefore I say unto you, all manner of sin and blasphemy shall be forgiven unto men: but the blasphemy against the Holy Spirit shall not be forgiven unto men. And whosoever speaketh against the Holy Spirit, it shall not be forgiven him, neither in this world, neither in the world to come."
- (b) ^{H. Leo} Boles says, "We have no New Testament example recorded of blasphemy against the Holy Spirit. However, it is possible for man to commit this sin or else Jesus would not have warned against it. The Pharisees had accused Christ of being in league with Beelzebub, the prince of devils, and by his Satanic agency casting out devils from men; Christ recognized this as blasphemy against himself; it was a malignant rejection of Christ against their own reason; it was devilish imputation to Christ; it was attributing to Christ a hellish purpose against the clearest evidence to the contrary. Apply the same principles to blasphemy against the Holy Spirit and we have the correct definition of this sin; it is a malignant, persistent, willful rejection of the Holy Spirit linked with an imputing to the Holy Spirit Hellish purposes against reason and conclusive evidence." The Holy Spirit, p. 164.
- (c) Cullom, in his Simplified Study of the Holy Spirit, says, "Among the several explanations of this topic, the one that seems most plausible to the writer is that men may sin against Christ and find forgiveness, but not against the Holy Spirit, because Christ was to be succeeded by the Holy Spirit when He returned to the Father. Consequently, the dispensation after Christ's ascension and under the guidance of the Spirit in which we now live represents man's last chance to accept God. Any other explanation which would attach a greater importance or rank to the Holy Spirit than to Christ would hardly be in keeping with the Scripture." Page 29.
- (d) Bowie says, "Blasphemy against the Spirit, therefore, is not any ordinary unwitting sin, and those sensitive persons, always to be found, who grow pitifully afraid that they may somehow have been guilty of the sin against the Spirit are the ones most unlikely ever to have committed it." Page 57.

NOTE: Actually, there is no difficulty here. To blaspheme means to speak against, to rail, and in this particular context, to attribute the works of God to stem from Satan. Obviously,

as long as a person does that and continues to denounce the reality of God, he will not be saved."

7. SO-CALLED
The Unpardonable Sin fits into a similar category.

- (a) I John 5:16 "If any man sees his brother sin a sin which is not unto death, he shall ask, and he shall give him life for them that sin not unto death. There is a sin unto death; I do not say that he shall pray for it."

NOTE: As long as a man is living, he can turn from sin and obey God and God will save. We are perfectly within our rights to pray for our fellowman in sin while he still lives. However, if ~~he~~ he persists in sin and dies in such a condition - John says there is no use to pray for him.

FINALLY, THE HOLY SPIRIT JOINS GOD THE FATHER AND THE SON IN PLEADING WITH US TO COME.

- A. Revelation 22:17 "And the Spirit and the Bride say Come, and let him that heareth say Come. And let him that is athirst come. And whosoever will, let him take the water of life, freely."