

The Third Person of the Trinity: The Holy Spirit

I. Why Study The Doctrine of The Holy Spirit?

- A. First, he is vital (i.e., the life giving necessity) to our own souls (1 Cor. 6:11, Gal. 5:16).
- B. Second, he is essential for effective gospel ministry (Acts 1:8, 2 Cor. 12:4-7).
- C. Third, we tend to think too little of him (Acts 8:18).

II. Who Is God? The Doctrine of The Trinity.

A. Defining Trinity: There is one God, and he eternally exists as three persons, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.

B. There is one God

1. Deuteronomy 6:4 “Hear, O Israel: The Lord our God, the Lord is one.” (see also Rom 3:30, 1 Cor. 8:4).
2. Is. 45:5-6, 21-22 “. . . besides me there is no God . . . I am the Lord, and there is no other. . . there is none besides me. . . For I am God, and there is no other.”

C. God eternally exists in three persons: The Father, Son, and Holy Spirit

1. God, who is one, eternally exists in three persons (Gen 1:1, 26).
2. The Spirit is present at creation (and is not created, but eternally existing, Gen 1:2).
3. The Son is the one through whom all things were created (John 1:1-3).

D. Each person of the Godhead is fully God

1. Jesus is fully God

- a. **John 1:1-3** “In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. ²He was in the beginning with God. ³All things were made through him, and without him was not any thing made that was made.”
- b. **John 20:28-29** “Thomas answered him, “My Lord and my God!” ²⁹Jesus said to him, “Have you believed because you have seen me? Blessed are those who have not seen and yet have believed.”

2. The Spirit is fully God

- a. **Acts 5:3-4** Peter said, “Ananias, why has Satan filled your heart to lie to the Holy Spirit ... You have not lied to man but to God.”
- b. Other passages that speak of believers and the church being the temple of the Holy Spirit (1 Cor. 6:19, 3:16).

3. Passages that show all three as equal

- a. **Matthew 28:19** “Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit”
- b. **2 Cor. 13:14** “The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ and the love of God and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit be with you all.”

E. This rules out some false ideas about God

1. **Tri-theism** – that we have three gods (cf. Deut. 6:4)
2. **Modalism** - affirms there is one God, but he doesn’t eternally exists in three persons (cf. Matt. 3:16-17)
3. **Arianism** - affirms there is one God, but denies that the Son and Spirit are God (cf. John 1:1-3)

F. Summary: God is triune

The Nicene Creed (a.d. 325; revised at Constantinople a.d. 381) “I believe in one God the Father Almighty . . . And in one Lord Jesus Christ, . . . God of God, Light of Light, very God of very God, begotten, not made, being of one substance with the Father; . . . And in the Holy Spirit, . . . who with the Father and the Son together is worshiped and glorified . . .”¹

III. Who Is The Holy Spirit? The Person of The Holy Spirit.

A. He is fully God and possesses the perfections of God’s character.

1. **Holy** - Romans 1:4 “the Spirit of holiness”
2. **Eternal** – Hebrews 9:14 “the eternal Spirit”
3. **Omnipresent** – Psalm 139:7 “Where shall I go from your Spirit? Or where shall I flee from your presence?”
4. **Omniscient** – 1 Cor. 2:10 “these things God has revealed to us through the Spirit. For the Spirit searches everything, even the depths of God.”
5. **Omnipotent** – Luke 1:35 “The Holy Spirit will come upon you, and the power of the Most High will overshadow you”
6. **Sovereign** – 1 Cor. 12:11 “All these are empowered by one and the same Spirit, who apportions to each one individually as he wills.”

B. He is not a force, but possesses personal traits

1. **He is a person, not a force** – John 16:7 “Nevertheless, I tell you the truth: it is to your advantage that I go away, for if I do not go away, the Helper will not come to you. But if I go, I will send him to you.”
2. **Mental traits** – 1 Cor. 2:10 “these things God has revealed to us through the Spirit. For the Spirit searches everything, even the depths of God.”
3. **Will** – 1 Cor. 12:11 “All these are empowered by one and the same Spirit, who apportions to each one individually as he wills.”
4. **Emotion** – Eph. 4:30 “And do not grieve the Holy Spirit of God, by whom you were sealed for the day of redemption.”
5. **Communication** – 1 Tim 4:1 “Now the Spirit expressly says . . .”
6. **Relationship** – Romans 8:26 “Likewise the Spirit helps us in our weakness. For we do not know what to pray for as we ought, but the Spirit himself intercedes for us with groanings too deep for words.”

IV. Application

A. Right thinking about the Spirit should lead to a mindfulness of the fact that

1. God is present with you, indwelling you.
2. God the Spirit is with you, to be your comforter
3. God the Spirit is purifying you, so you should walk in holiness by his strength by putting off sin and putting on holiness.
4. God the Spirit teaches you, so you should read the Bible he inspired with expectation and prayer.

¹ Grudem, Wayne A. 2004. *Systematic Theology: An Introduction to Biblical Doctrine*. Grand Rapids, MI: Inter-Varsity Press; Zondervan, 1169.