

The Holy Spirit

W
M
3
3
4
2

The purpose of this newsletter is to show from the Bible that there is a Holy Spirit. Unfortunately, the considerable confusion on this topic stems from the controversy between Arianism and Trinitarianism. This newsletter takes a purely biblical approach.

A Holy Spirit?

The Holy Spirit is mentioned in both the Old Testament and the New Testament. Two specific places in the Old Testament use the term “Holy Spirit”. We will examine these verses first.

Cast me not away from thy presence;
and take not thy holy spirit from me.
(*Psalms 51:11 KJV*)

This verse speaks explicitly of the Holy Spirit. It demonstrates that the Holy Spirit is withdrawn when someone sins against God. The Hebrew word for “Spirit” is “Ruach,” which means “wind.” Due to the nature of the Hebrew language, it is also used to describe other things. Strong’s concordance allows for the translation of Spirit: “by resemblance spirit, but only of a rational being (including its expression and functions).” Since a spirit cannot be grasped, but its effects can be felt, the Hebrew language uses the word “wind” (also meaning “breath”) to describe a spirit. Jesus described it like this:

The wind bloweth where it listeth, and thou hearest the sound thereof, but canst not tell whence it cometh, and whither it goeth: so is every one that is born of the Spirit. (*John 3:8 KJV*)

Jesus tells us the effects of the Holy Spirit are like the wind; they suddenly come upon us when we need them. We receive moments of inspiration, where we distinctly hear the sound of the Spirit:

And thine ears shall hear a word behind thee, saying, This is the way, walk ye in it, when ye turn to the right hand, and when ye turn to the left. (*Isaiah 30:21 KJV*)

Just as the refreshing wind on a hot day, we feel the effects of the Spirit: love, Joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faith, gentleness, and temperance, all in their season, when we need them most. The word “Ruach” can only refer to a rational

being; this means the Holy Spirit is not merely a power, essence, or force, but a rational being. The word “Ruach” is also used to describe angels. The other place the Holy Spirit is mentioned is found in Isaiah 63:7-11:

“I will mention the lovingkindnesses of the LORD, and the praises of the LORD, according to all that the LORD hath bestowed on us, and the great goodness toward the house of Israel, which he hath bestowed on them according to his mercies, and according to the multitude of his lovingkindnesses. For he said, Surely they are my people, children that will not lie: so he was their Saviour. In all their affliction he was afflicted, and the angel of his presence saved them: in his love and in his pity he redeemed them; and he bare them, and carried them all the days of old. But they rebelled, and vexed his holy Spirit: therefore he was turned to be their enemy, and he fought against them. Then he remembered the days of old, Moses, and his people, saying, Where is he that brought them up out of the sea with the shepherd of his flock? where is he that put his holy Spirit within him?”

The Holy Spirit should not be understood to be the “angel of His presence.” The messenger of His presence was Christ; He was the messenger of God the Father. We see that the Holy Spirit was vexed with the wicked action of Israel. The Holy Spirit spoken of here is also not a holy angel. While many opportunistic unholy angels take residence in man, I am unaware of a single place in the Bible that shows a Holy Angel dwelling in a man. This place is reserved for God only. Our hearts were meant to be His throne:

What? know ye not that your body is the temple of the Holy Ghost which is in you, which ye have of God, and ye are not your own? (*1 Corinthians 6:19 KJV*)

These teachings are all consistent with Scripture, as clarified by Jesus Himself and His apostles in the New Testament.

The Holy Spirit is most commonly referred to as “The Spirit of the Lord,” and this reference

OTHERS NEED THIS ALSO - MAKE COPIES AND SHARE IT WITH THEM

DATE OF PUBLICATION: MAY 2024

2 appears frequently in the Old Testament Scripture. Additionally, the term “Spirit” can also refer to the Holy Spirit in some cases. A prime example can be found in Genesis:

And the LORD said, My spirit shall not always strive with man, for that he also is flesh: yet his days shall be an hundred and twenty years. (Genesis 6:3 KJV)

Jesus and the Holy Spirit

Some Christians believe the Holy Spirit is merely the presence of Jesus. Is this what the Bible teaches?

At the Baptism of Jesus, the Holy Spirit descended on Him.

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. (Matthew 3:16-17 KJV)

This was not a vision; Luke records the same event:

Now when all the people were baptized, it came to pass, that Jesus also being baptized, and praying, the heaven was opened, And the Holy Ghost descended in a bodily shape like a dove upon him, and a voice came from heaven, which said, Thou art my beloved Son; in thee I am well pleased. (Luke 3:21-22 KJV)

The underlined words “bodily shape” correspond to the Greek word “somatikos,” which translates to “physical.” This doesn’t mean the Holy Spirit is a dove, but that there was a physical manifestation and an audible voice. These were two witnesses of Christ’s divinity, the Father and the Holy Spirit. Luke then records:

And Jesus being full of the Holy Ghost returned from Jordan, and was led by the Spirit into the wilderness, (Luke 4:1 KJV)

If the Holy Spirit were merely the presence of Jesus and not a separate Being then this verse would be understood to say “Jesus was full of Himself when He returned from Jordan, and He led Himself into the wilderness.” If this were the case, why would it be wrong for us to be full of ourselves or guide our own lives? Further, if Jesus became submissive to His father’s will, why is He obeying the will of the Holy Ghost? This is simple to explain if you believe in the Godhead. Lastly, The Bible tells us to have the Mind of Christ. If this was His mind, to lead Himself, then how can He condemn pride and self-sufficiency? In John,

Jesus mentions something else:

And I will pray the Father, and he shall give you another Comforter, that he may abide with you for ever (John 14:16 KJV)

This verse teaches two important lessons. First, it confirms that the Comforter is the Holy Spirit. Second, it tells us that the Holy Spirit is sent from the Father in the name of Christ. Coming in the name of someone means coming on their behalf and under their authority. Jesus said of Himself:

I am come in my Father’s name, and ye receive me not: if another shall come in his own name, him ye will receive. (John 5:43 KJV)

And when Philip asked “Show us the Father” Jesus answered:

Jesus saith unto him, Have I been so long time with you, and yet hast thou not known me, Philip? he that hath seen me hath seen the Father; and how sayest thou then, Shew us the Father? (John 14:9 KJV)

Jesus did more than speak on behalf of the Father; He answered as the Father. The unity that exists in the Godhead is such that this is appropriate. Jesus came in the name of the Father and represented the Father on earth. When questioned, He answered as the Father. While Christ was upon the Cross, the Bible says:

To wit, that God was in Christ, reconciling the world unto himself, not imputing their trespasses unto them; and hath committed unto us the word of reconciliation. (2 Corinthians 5:19 KJV)

God the Father was in Christ, reconciling the world to Himself. Just as Christ was in the Father, the Father was in Christ. Now that we have seen this example in the life of Christ, we can see it also played out in the person of the Holy Spirit.

But the Comforter, which is the Holy Ghost, 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. (John 14:26 KJV)

The Holy Spirit is sent by the Father and comes in the name of Christ. This means He comes on behalf of Christ and under His authority. He is, as it were, Christ in the heart. God is so united that when we call upon Christ, the Holy Spirit answers for Him, as Christ answered for the Father. And this is why Jesus can say things like:

I will not leave you comfortless: I will come to you. (*John 14:18 KJV*)

W
M
3
3
4
2
In other places, the Holy Spirit is referred to as the Spirit of Christ. As Christ humbled Himself in submission to the Father, the Holy Spirit humbles Himself in submission to Christ. Just as the Father came to the world in the person of Christ (the Messenger of His presence), so Christ comes to the heart of every believer through the messenger of His presence, the Holy Spirit. Now let's deal with the earlier verse:

I am come in my Father's name, and ye receive me not: if another shall come in his own name, him ye will receive. (*John 5:43 KJV*)

If the Holy Spirit were Christ, then Christ would be coming in His own name. The world could receive something coming in its own name, meaning under its own authority and on its own behalf. But Jesus says:

And I will pray the Father, and he shall give you another Comforter, that he may abide with you for ever; Even the Spirit of truth; whom the world cannot receive, because it seeth him not, neither knoweth him: but ye know him; for he dwelleth with you, and shall be in you. (*John 14:16-17 KJV*)

The world cannot receive the Holy Spirit; therefore, it cannot be Christ coming in His own name. The world can receive the spirit of satan, for satan does come in his own authority and in his own name. For this reason, there is an exceedingly great danger in believing that the Holy Spirit is only the presence of Christ and not a separate being that is Christ's representative. Christ coming in His own name is not scriptural. Additionally, the fact that the Holy Spirit does not come in its own name is proof that the Spirit is of God. Not a single being that is of God's kingdom comes in its own name (to clarify, I mean in its own authority and on its own behalf). Again, Jesus indicates He is not the person of the Holy Spirit:

Nevertheless I tell you the truth; It is expedient for you that I go away: for if I go not away, the Comforter will not come unto you; but if I depart, I will send him unto you. (*John 16:7 KJV*)

Here is the third example that proves the Holy Spirit is not merely the presence of Christ. If it were, Jesus would be saying, "The Truth is, it is better for you that I go away because if I don't leave, I can't come to you again and comfort you, but if I

depart, then I can return and comfort you." This is called creating a problem so you can provide the solution. God doesn't do that. Additionally, the underlined word is not the Greek personal pronoun "ego" meaning "I" but the personal pronoun "Autos" or self. It appears in our English language in words such as automobile, meaning "self-moving." An automobile only becomes an "egomobile" when I push it to the gas station because it ran out of gas and cannot move itself. The Greek does not allow for Christ to be speaking of Himself in this verse.

Unfortunately, some believe the Holy Spirit is literally satan. This was also an accusation the Pharisees made against Christ. Jesus had just cast out a demon that made someone both blind and mute:

But when the Pharisees heard it, they said, This fellow doth not cast out devils, but by Beelzebub the prince of the devils. (*Matthew 12:24 KJV*)

And if I by Beelzebub cast out devils, by whom do your children cast them out? therefore they shall be your judges. But if I cast out devils by the Spirit of God, then the kingdom of God is come unto you. (*Matthew 12:27-28 KJV*)

There can be no doubt that the Spirit of God is the Holy Spirit because Jesus says:

Wherefore I say unto you, All manner of sin and blasphemy shall be forgiven unto men: but the blasphemy against the Holy Ghost shall not be forgiven unto men. And whosoever speaketh a word against the Son of man, it shall be forgiven him: but whosoever speaketh against the Holy Ghost, it shall not be forgiven him, neither in this world, neither in the world to come. (*Matthew 12:31-32 KJV*)

In accusing Jesus of casting out demons through the power of satan, they had blasphemed the Holy Spirit. To justify their unbelief, they had condemned God. This course of action is still practiced today. At a later date, when Jesus was speaking about God the Father sending good gifts, He mentioned that He would not send a serpent to those who ask for the good gift of the Holy Spirit:

If a son shall ask bread of any of you that is a father, will he give him a stone? or if he ask a fish, will he for a fish give him a serpent? Or if he shall ask an egg, will he offer him a scorpion? If ye then, being evil, know how to give good gifts unto your children: how much more shall your heavenly Father

- 4 give the Holy Spirit to them that ask him?
(*Luke 11:11-13 KJV*)

If you ask for the Holy Spirit, why would God send you that old serpent, the devil, to be with you? What kind of twisted father would do that?

Is the Holy Spirit God?

Paul tells us that the Holy Spirit searches out the hidden things of God:

But as it is written, Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man, the things which God hath prepared for them that love him. 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. (1 Corinthians 2:9-11 KJV)

The Holy Spirit must be God because He knows the mind of God. He can uncover the deep things hidden in the mind of God. Paul asks this question:

For who hath known the mind of the Lord? or who hath been his counsellor?
(*Romans 11:34 KJV*)

For who hath known the mind of the Lord, that he may instruct him? But we have the mind of Christ. (*1 Corinthians 2:16 KJV*)

Before anyone accuses me of crafty reasoning, I am merely repeating the prophets own argument:

The Holy Spirit has a personality, else He could not bear witness to our spirits and with our spirits that we are the children of God. He must also be a divine person, else He could not search out the secrets which lie hidden in the mind 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." [1 Corinthians 2:11.] (*Manuscript 20, 1906 par. 32*)

There is not a being in existence that can search the mind of God and is not His equal. There are only three Beings that have the mind of God. God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Spirit. The person of the Holy Spirit reveals to us the mind

of Christ. It searches out the deep, hidden things and imparts to us the character of Jesus. Should the spirit depart, we would be left with only the mind of a man. Note that Jesus was instructed when He was on earth by the Holy Spirit:

And Jesus being full of the Holy Ghost returned from Jordan, and was led by the Spirit into the wilderness, (*Luke 4:1 KJV*)

For as many as are led by the Spirit of God, they are the sons of God. (*Romans 8:14 KJV*)

God has given us, through the Holy Spirit, the mind of Christ, enabling us to understand spiritual things. But just as soon as we grieve the Holy Spirit by disobedience, the mind of Christ departs from us, for Christ always walked in the Spirit. Who actually understands what God has bestowed upon repentant sinners? Is it not the highest honor that can be given? John tells us:

Behold, what manner of love the Father hath bestowed upon us, that we should be called the sons of God: therefore the world knoweth us not, because it knew him not.
(*1 John 3:1 KJV*)

God has made repentant sinners a temple where God the Holy Spirit resides.

What? know ye not that your body is the temple of the Holy Ghost which is in you, which ye have of God, and ye are not your own? (*1 Corinthians 6:19 KJV*)

And He has given these two promises to those that obey the promptings of the Holy Spirit:

He that overcometh shall inherit all things; and I will be his God, and he shall be my son. (*Revelation 21:7 KJV*)

To him that overcometh will I grant to sit with me in my throne, even as I also overcame, and am set down with my Father in his throne. (*Revelation 3:21 KJV*)

For a finished work,

Jonathan Taylor

Wisdom is justified of all her children. -Luke 7:35

More Food for the Little Flock —