

1. Introduction – A force?

- 1.1. The idea that the Holy Spirit is a force rather than a person is an old heresy dating back to at least the fourth century, but it has survived to this day.
- 1.2. It is the view, for example, of the Jehovah's Witnesses, who argue that the Spirit is God's "active force." They argue that Scripture speaks of the Holy Spirit's being "poured out" on someone or "filling" someone. A person cannot be "poured out" or "fill" something, they argue, so the Holy Spirit must not be a person. They argue that when Scripture uses personal language regarding the Holy Spirit, it is using figurative language.
 - 1.2.1. Those who argue in this way have the facts precisely backward. In the first place, the language of "pouring out" and "filling" is applied to subjects in the Scripture about whose personality there is no doubt. David (a human person) cries out, "I am poured out like water" (Ps. 22:14).
 - 1.2.2. Paul (another human person) speaks of being "poured out" like a drink offering (Phil. 2:17; 2 Tim. 4:6). Since we know that David and Paul were real persons, we know that the language of "pouring out" is being used figuratively. What about the language of filling? In Jeremiah 23:24, God declares that He fills heaven and earth. This does not mean that God is an impersonal force. Jesus is also said to "fill" all things (Eph. 1:23; 4:10). Jesus, too, is not an impersonal force. In short, if someone is said to be "poured out" or to "fill" something, it is not proof that that someone is not a person.
- 1.3. Additionally, personal language is applied to the Holy Spirit in a multitude of ways and in a multitude of contexts that make it impossible to conclude they are all examples of personification of an impersonal thing. Scripture uses personal pronouns when speaking of the Holy Spirit (e.g., John 15:26; 16:13–14; Acts 10:19–20; 13:2).
- 1.4. The Holy Spirit is "He," not "it." Scripture ascribes to the Holy Spirit personal properties such as understanding (Isa. 11:2; 1 Cor. 2:10–11) and will (1 Cor. 12:11; John 3:8). Scripture also ascribes numerous personal activities to the Holy Spirit, including speaking (Mark 13:11), revealing (Luke 2:26), guiding (John 16:13), teaching (Luke 12:12), bearing witness (John 15:26), loving (Rom. 15:30), warning (1 Tim. 4:1), and appointing people to office (Acts 13:2).
- 1.5. Has a force such as gravity ever appointed anyone to office? Has a force such as magnetism ever exhibited understanding and will and the ability to speak and love? No. The Holy Spirit does these things because the Holy Spirit is not a force. The Holy Spirit is a person.

2. The Holy Spirit is fully God

- 2.1. We have already talked about God the Father and last time we recognised that Jesus, the Son, is fully God. But what about the Holy Spirit?
- 2.2. His name
 - 2.2.1. Matthew 28:19. Jesus places the Holy Spirit as being equal with Him and the Father. It would have been unthinkable for Jesus to say something like baptising them in the name of the Father than of the Son and the archangel Michael. We can only be baptised into the name of God Himself. So by including the Holy Spirit here, Jesus is saying that the Holy Spirit is God.
 - 2.2.2. Acts 5:3-4 Peter makes it clear that when Ananias and Sapphira lie to the Holy Spirit they are, in fact, lying to God.
 - 2.2.3. Matthew 12:28-31. The Holy Spirit can be blasphemed against. This also points to His deity.
- 2.3. His attributes
 - 2.3.1. Psalm 139:7-8. This passage declares that the Holy Spirit is omnipresent
 - 2.3.2. 1 Corinthians 2:10 This passage declares that the Holy Spirit is omniscience
- 2.4. Spiritual Gifts
 - 2.4.1. 1 Corinthians 12 Who else apart from God can sovereignly distribute the gifts of God? Also see Hebrews 2:4.
- 2.5. What would we stand to lose if the Holy Spirit were not God?
 - 2.5.1. John 3:5-7. If the Holy Spirit were not fully God, the implications for salvation are serious. Scripture teaches that the Holy Spirit regenerates believers and indwells them and fills them. But if the Holy Spirit is less than God, how can we be sure that He can do any of these things? Moreover, unless He is fully God, just as the Father and the Son are fully God, what guarantees do we have that even if He tried to do such things, the Father and the Son would recognise His actions and relate to us accordingly?
 - 2.5.2. So, for our salvation to be sure the Holy Spirit must be fully God.

3. The work of the Holy Spirit

- 3.1. The work of the Holy Spirit is to manifest the active presence of God in the world and especially in the church.
- 3.2. We see this in the whole Bible, but it is particularly true of the new testament age – the age that we live in.
- 3.3. In the old testament we see the presence of God manifested in His glory and in theophanies.
- 3.4. In the gospels we see Jesus manifested as the presence of God
- 3.5. But after Jesus ascended into heaven the Holy Spirit is now the primary manifestation of God among us.
- 3.6. At Pentecost, the Holy Spirit comes to grant power to the church.
- 3.7. It is appropriate that Paul should call the Holy Spirit the first fruits (Romans 8:23) and the guarantee (2 Corinthians 1:22; 5:5) of the full manifestation of God's presence that we will know in the new heavens and new earth (Revelation 21:3-4)
- 3.8. The arrival of the Holy Spirit brings abundant blessings from God (Isaiah 32:14-18; 44:3) to a people
- 3.9. The departure of the Holy Spirit removed the blessing of God from a people (Isaiah 63:10)
- 3.10. How does the Holy Spirit work?
 - 3.10.1. The Holy Spirit purifies
 - 3.10.2. The Holy Spirit unifies
 - 3.10.3. The Holy Spirit reveals
 - 3.10.4. The Holy Spirit empowers

4. The Holy Spirit Purifies

- 4.1. The clue is in the word "Holy".
- 4.2. He cleanses us from sin and sanctifies us or makes us more holy in the way we conduct life.
- 4.3. In the lives of unbelievers there is some restraining influence of the Holy Spirit (John 16:8-11; Acts 7:51)
- 4.4. When we become Christians, He does an initial cleansing work, making a decisive break with the patterns of sin that were in our lives before. (1 Corinthians 6:11; Titus 3:5)
- 4.5. After the initial break with the sin that the Holy Spirit works in our lives at conversion, He also produces in us a growth in holiness. He produces the fruit of the Spirit in us (Galatians 5:22-23), those qualities that reflect the character of God. This is the clearest evidence that a person is truly saved (Matthew 7:15-20).
- 4.6. We are transformed by the Holy Spirit (2 Corinthians 3:18)
- 4.7. He sanctifies us (2 Thessalonians 2:13; 1 Peter 1:2, Romans 8:13) and we grow in personal holiness.

5. The Holy Spirit Unifies

- 5.1. When the Holy Spirit was poured out on the church at Pentecost this was the fulfilment of Joel 2:28-32.
- 5.2. There is an emphasis here of the Holy Spirit coming on a community of believers, not just on a leader like we often in the OT, but on sons and daughters, old men and young men, male and female servants, the entire community.
- 5.3. A new community is created by the Holy Spirit on Pentecost – the church.
- 5.4. One thing makes this community stand out, their unity (Acts 2:44-47)
- 5.5. Paul attributes the deepening of fellowship of believers not to the Father or Jesus but to the Holy Spirit (2 Corinthians 13:14)
- 5.6. The new unity between Jews and Gentiles in the church was by the Spirit (Ephesians 2:18; 22, Ephesians 4:3)
- 5.7. Paul's discussion of spiritual gifts also builds on this theme of unity. Our differing gifts must never be a source of division, but rather than source of unity. The diversity of our gifts draws us to depend on each other. (1 Corinthians 12:21)
- 5.8. The desires of the flesh that seek to bring division are opposed to being led by the Spirit (Galatians 5:20)
- 5.9. The Holy Spirit is the one who produces love in our hearts (Romans 5:5, Galatians 5:22, Colossians 1:8) and this love is the perfect bond of unity (Colossians 3:14)
- 5.10. When the Holy Spirit is working strongly in a church, the church community will be in unity and overflowing in love for each other.

6. The Holy Spirit Reveals

- 6.1. Revelation the Prophets and Apostles (Ezekiel 11:5; Zechariah 7:12, 2 Peter 1:21, John 16:13)
- 6.2. He gives evidence of God's presence (Numbers 11:25-26; Judges 14:6; 15:14, 1 Samuel 10:6, 10; John 1:32; Acts 2:2-3; John 7:39)
- 6.3. He guides and directs God's people (Matthew 4:1; Mark 1:12; Acts 8:29; Acts 10:19-20, Acts 13:2; Acts 8:39-40, Romans 8:14; Galatians 5:18)

- 6.4. He provides a Godlike atmosphere when He manifests His presence (John 16:8-11; Romans 5:5; 1 Corinthians 14:33; Romans 14:17)
- 6.5. He gives us assurance (Romans 8:16; 1 John 3:24; 1 John 4:13)
- 6.6. He teaches (John 14:26; John 16:13; Luke 12:12; 1 Corinthians 2:12)
- 6.7. He gives specific revelation (Luke 2:26; Acts 11:28; Acts 21:11)
7. The Holy Spirit empowers
 - 7.1. He gives life (Psalm 104:30; Job 34:14-15; John 3:6-7; John 6:63; Romans 8:11)
 - 7.2. He gives power for service
 - 7.2.1. OT (Numbers 27:18; Judges 3:10; 1 Samuel 11:6; 1 Samuel 16:13; Exodus 31:3; 35:34; Isaiah 11:2-3)
 - 7.2.2. Jesus (Matthew 3:16; Luke 4:1; 4:14; John 3:34-35; Acts 10:38)
 - 7.2.3. Followers of Christ (Acts 1:8; Acts 6:5; Acts 4:8, 31; 1 Corinthians 12:11; Romans 8:26; Matthew 12:28; Acts 13:9-11)
8. We must be careful with the Holy Spirit
 - 8.1. Many examples in both the OT and NT indicate that the Holy Spirit will bestow or withdraw blessing according to whether He is pleased by the situation He sees
 - 8.2. The Spirit came mightily on Samson several times (Judges 13:25; 14:6) but ultimately left him when he persisted in sin (Judges 16:20)
 - 8.3. In the NT the Holy Spirit can be grieved (Ephesians 4:30)
 - 8.4. We can quench the Spirit (1 Thessalonians 5:19)
 - 8.5. Lying to the Holy Spirit (Acts 5:3, 9)
 - 8.6. Insulting the Holy Spirit (Hebrews 10:29)
 - 8.7. Blasphemy against the Holy Spirit (Matthew 12:31-32)