

SERIES: Holy Spirit

MESSAGE: God Within Us

DATE: January 11, 2026

SCRIPTURE:

KEY: Scripture Slide Media Humor Serious

THEME - ONE

This year, our theme is 'ONE', and it captures the reason why we're here and why we exist. We exist for the glory of the ONE True God, we exist to grow in our relationship with Jesus ONE step at a time, and we exist for the ONE person that doesn't yet know Jesus.

And, as we start the year, we want to focus on the One True God. This comes from Ephesians 4:4-6 (NLT) ⁴For there is one body and one Spirit, We are going to talk about the Spirit for the next three weeks. just as you have been called to one glorious hope for the future. ⁵ There is one Lord, one faith, one baptism, ⁶ one God and Father of all, who is over all, in all, and living through all. And we want to answer

Who is God

Who Is The Holy Spirit

How Can we Know Him

How do I know the Spirit is leading me?

What does it mean to have the Spirit lead me?

What's the Difference between my thoughts and the Spirit?

What is God's purpose for my life?

Those are some of the questions we'll answer over the next few weeks. So, before we answer those questions, we have to understand the Spirit and his relationship in the Godhead.

As Christians, we want to jump straight to How does God want to use me...that's very important, and before we look into that, we need to start at the beginning. **FOUNDATION - FORMATION - FRUIT**

Foundation - Is there a God, who is He, and why is he with me?

Formation - what is God's Plan for me and my life?

Fruit - what does God want to do through me for the benefit of others?

But this week, I want to start I'm probably the only person who's ever wondered this. I've wondered this more times than I want to admit.

DOES GOD EXIST If someone who isn't a Christian asked you that, how would you answer? [PAUSE]

CATS AND DOGS

A group of researchers did a very religious study on a group of cats and dogs. They took a group of cats and dogs and asked them 'Who is God?' The dogs said, my owner - feeds me, walks me, pets me, gives me toys, they must be God. Then the cats said - he feeds me, walks me, pets me, gives me toys, I must be God. **The truth - everyone has an answer to that question** We all have thoughts on who God is. And, our answer to this question is one of the most important questions we will ever answer in life. Every other decision should be informed by our answer to this question.

[FULL SLIDE]

ATHEISTS - GOD DOESN'T EXIST

POLYTHEIST - THERE ARE MANY GODS

PANTHEIST - EVERYTHING IS GOD

MONOTHEIST - THERE IS ONE GOD

TRINITY TRIANGLE

CHRISTIANS BELIEVE IN ONE GOD. And by nature, to claim that there is only one God is an exclusive claim, which means - if there is only one God - then there can't be any other gods. Paul writes this 1 Corinthians 8:6 (NLT) ⁶ But for us, There is one God, the Father, by whom all things were created, and for whom we live. And there is one Lord, Jesus Christ, through whom all things were created, and through whom we live.

As Christians, we believe there is one God and only one God. He exists eternally and equally, united in three persons. There is a word for this. We believe in the **TRIUNE GOD** Tri - is three Une - is short for unity.

1 God in 3 persons. Father, Son, Spirit. Godhead

HOW DO YOU EXPLAIN A MYSTERY? [Opportunity for story]

TRINITY TRIANGLE

About four hundred years after Jesus lived, there was a guy named Augustine. If you've been to Florida, there is a town called St. Augustine. It's named after this guy. He developed what we'll call the **TRINITY TRIANGLE** to help us begin to understand the God and the life and relationship he has brought us into.

The Father is God – the Son is God – the Spirit is God, but the Father is not the Son or the Spirit. The Son is not the Father or the Spirit, the Spirit is not the Father or the Son.

EXAMPLE FROM SCRIPTURE. [Take image off screen]

Let's look at The Baptism of Jesus Luke 3:21–22 (NLT) ²¹ One day when the crowds were being baptized, Jesus himself was baptized. As he was praying, the heavens opened, ²² and the Holy Spirit, in bodily form, descended on him like a dove. And a voice from heaven said, "You are my dearly loved Son, and you bring me great joy."

The Father was not in the Water – Jesus was. The Father did not descend on Jesus like a dove, The Spirit did. And yet – they were and are united in

purpose – Matthew 3, Jesus tells us why – God was carrying out his plan to save us.

His essence – who God is.

His nature – which is how he conducts himself.

That's who God is, but now we want to see that

THE SPIRIT IS GOD WITH US

IMMANUEL

We just went through the Christmas season over the course of the last month. And in the Christmas season, there is a Biblical word called 'Immanuel' which means God with us. It's the true story of God who comes and lives with humanity, so that one day, we can live with God. God's desire has always been to be with his creation in a right relationship.

So – Jesus comes to earth. He is the GodMan with us. but guess what – Jesus didn't stay on earth.

At the end of his time on earth – Jesus promised his followers:

John 15:26–27 (NLT) ²⁶ "But I will send you the Advocate—the Spirit of truth. He will come to you from the Father and will testify all about me.

If Jesus didn't make this promise, then he would be God who left us. But God didn't leave and say good luck – I hope it works out. He is with us.

STORY OF CLAY

At home we have black lab named Georgia. She just turned 7 in December. Every morning and evening, we get to feed her. And I've been doing it for 7 years now, and it's pretty easy for me to get her food

and bowl around by myself. I could almost do it in my sleep. But, now that I have a son, I want to teach him how to care for the things we have, including our dog.

So, one thing he likes to do is feed her. But, as he is growing, I want to do that with him. Does it take more time – yes. Does he spill it on the ground – sometimes. But the goal isn't to feed her quickly – It's to be with him....

Anything God asks us to do – he has the power and ability to do on in his own power and in his own way without us. But he chooses to BE WITH US.

HEARTACHE AND HARDSHIP

John 14-16 – I would encourage you to read those three chapters this week as we talk more about the Holy Spirit the next few weeks. But Jesus talks about the Holy Spirit primarily in John 14 and 16. Right in the middle of Jesus promising to send the Spirit to be with us, he also promises that we will have difficulty and troubles in this life.

In life, we will experience pain and hardship. As Christians, we sometimes wonder why God is allowing us to go through this.

John 14:16–17 (NLT) Jesus said,

¹⁶ And I will ask the Father, and he will give you another Advocate, or a comforter and a helper.

who will never leave you. ¹⁷ He is the Holy Spirit, who leads into all truth. The world People who haven't placed their faith in Jesus, cannot receive him, because it isn't looking for him and doesn't recognize him. But you know him, because he lives with you now and later will be in you.

As Christians, we have the hope and the assurance that God will never leave us. God is with us when we go through the death of a loved. God is with us when we lose a job. God is with us when our children are running from God. God is with us when we don't know what to do.

We also exist for the one person who doesn't know Jesus. When they walk through hardship and heartache, they don't have the Spirit of God in them. and the question some of them ask is -

DOES GOD EXIST Where is he.... – this is a prayer. You and I have the opportunity to be the answer to someone's prayer. Where is God? We have God with us and in us. When we step into other people's

hardship and heartache, when we ‘be the church’ we can bring hope to hopeless situations.

LANDING – STEPHEN MINISTRY COMMISSIONING

And one of the ways we do that is through care.

When the church reflects

[Story of walking through hardship]

As people who have been created in the Image of God, we have the opportunity to participate in the divine life here. As people around us experience the hardship and heartache of life, we can be with people through their hurt.

This isn’t simply a Christian Cliché – it is an invitation for Christians to do for others, what Christ through the Spirit has done for us. He is GOD WITH US

As a church, one way we do this is through a program called Stephen Ministry. And

Going to Close the Service Different.

What is Stephen Ministry

- Care Needs are overwhelming
- Appointed
- “After” People
- Stephen in Acts
- No one should have to suffer alone.

Do we have to be a Stephen minister to share the hope of the Gospel?

Galatians 6:2 (NLT) ² Share each other’s burdens, and in this way obey the law of Christ.

Support Nate in the Prayer