

e ssentials

Faith in One Accord

1) TITLE: We Believe In the Person of the Holy Spirit

2) INTRODUCTION

- A. Our support Scripture text for this lesson is John 14:26—*"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 that I have said to you."*¹
- B. What we believe...

"We believe in the Holy Spirit, the third person of the Trinity. We believe that He leads us in the way and the truth and the life of the believer. We believe He convicts people of sin, righteousness and judgment, and that He regenerates people so that they would have eternal life. We also believe the Holy Spirit empowers the preaching and teaching of the Gospel" (GRCC Statement of Faith).

- C. Now, back in 1977, a popular movie was released that would forever influence filmmaking especially within the sci-fi genre—marrying storytelling with visual effects the likes that was never seen back then—and that film was called Star Wars.
- i. And in the film we were introduced to the iconic words—*"May the Force be with you."*
- ii. After the release of the movie, immediately many Christians quickly grabbed onto the idea of the concept of the Force equating it to the Holy Spirit.

¹ All Scripture from the ESV—English Standard Version, (Wheaton, IL: Crossway Bibles, 2016)) unless noted.

- iii. One can understand why one would do so because the Force was invisible like the Holy Spirit.
- iv. However, let us be very, very clear—while the Force is fictional and IMPERSONAL, the Holy Spirit is REAL, who is a PERSON and He is PERSONAL.

3) KEY POINT

- A. The first key in our understanding about the Holy Spirit is that He is a Person and He is God.
- B. Because there is much to cover concerning the Holy Spirit, we will break this topic into two parts. Part 1 we will cover the Person or personality of the Holy Spirit, and in Part 2 we will cover the Work of the Holy Spirit.

4) TRANSITION

- A. So, let's look into the importance of why believing in the Person of the Spirit is essential to our Christian faith.

TEACHING

I. Who Is the Holy Spirit?

- A. The Holy Spirit is the eternal Third Person of the Holy Trinity.
 - 1. Hebrews 9:14—*"How much more will the blood of Christ, who through the eternal Spirit offered himself without blemish to God, purify our conscience from dead works to serve the living God."*
- B. Just like God the Father and God the Son, Jesus—God the Holy Spirit existed eternally before time began.

1. In the beginning, God the Spirit has always existed and will always exist with God the Father and God the Son.
- C. The Holy Spirit was involved during creation. Genesis 1:1-2 says, *"[1] In the beginning, God created the heavens and the earth. [2] The earth was without form and void, and darkness was over the face of the deep. And the Spirit of God was hovering over the face of the waters."*
1. So, in the beginning God did His work of creation by means of the Spirit of God, the Holy Spirit.
 2. The word hovering as used here with the Spirit is also used in Deuteronomy 32:11 which *"suggests that the Spirit of God was watching over his creation just as a bird watches over its young."*
 - a). This tells us the personal and intimate involvement of the creative and wisdom of the Spirit in creation who is not some impersonal force who exerted His divine power upon creation.
 3. This tells us that the Holy Spirit possesses or having absolute *"Will, Intelligence, Power, and Capacity for Love."*³
- D. Now, noticed that in the Scripture pronouns like "He" and "His" are used to signify that the Holy Spirit is a person.
1. In John 16:13, Jesus said this of the Holy Spirit—*"When the Spirit of truth comes, he will guide you into all the truth, for he will not speak on his own authority,*

² Robert D. Bergen, *"Genesis," in CSB Study Bible: Notes, ed. Edwin A. Blum and Trevin Wax (Nashville, TN: Holman Bible Publishers, 2017), 5.*

³ *Ibid., 26.*

but whatever he hears he will speak, and he will declare to you the things that are to come."

a). Jesus described the Holy Spirit as a person that we can have a relationship with and enjoy His presence in the lives of us Christians.

2. In 2nd Corinthians 13:14, the apostle Paul closes out the letter saying, *"The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ and the love of God and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit be with you all."*

a). The Holy Spirit is a person we can experience fellowship with.

E. So, here are some things the Holy Spirit experiences that we humans experience. For example:

1. The Holy Spirit can be lied to.

a). In Acts 5:3-4 when the apostle Peter confronted Ananias for lying to the Spirit about a piece of property, Peter stated that Ananias was lying against God.

b). Peter said to Ananias in Acts 5:3-4, *"[3] But Peter said, "Ananias, why has Satan filled your heart to lie to the Holy Spirit and to keep back for yourself part of the proceeds of the land? [4] While it remained unsold, did it not remain your own? And after it was sold, was it not at your disposal? Why is it that you have contrived this deed in your heart? You have not lied to man but to God."*

c). What Peter confirmed was that to lie against the Holy Spirit is to lie to a person and to God because the Holy Spirit is God, and a personal Being.

2. The Spirit can be grieved.

- a). Ephesians 4:30 says, *"And do not grieve the Holy Spirit of God, by whom you were sealed for the day of redemption."*
- b). To grieve means *"to give pain of mind to; to afflict; to wound the feelings; To afflict; to inflict pain on; to make sorrowful; to excite regret in; to offend; to displease; to provoke."*⁴
 - (i) This tells us that the Holy Spirit can emote; He can express emotions.
 - (ii) One way we can grieve the Holy Spirit is through our disobedience of God's Word and His standard of righteousness; or not walking in accordance under His guidance and influence, but fulfilling the desires of the flesh; or when members within the body of Christ are bickering and fighting, and causing all kinds of trouble through gossip, bitterness or even pride.
 - (iii) This should tell us that the Holy Spirit is not an impassionate Being but that His grieving is personal and comes from a place of love.
- c). Here's a question: can you grieve a rock, a car, a chair, or a nice steak?
 - (i) But you can grieve a person. And the Holy Spirit *is* a person that you can absolutely grieve, hurt and disappoint.

⁴ Noah Webster, *Noah Webster's First Edition of An American Dictionary of the English Language*. (Anaheim, CA: Foundation for American Christian Education, 2006).

3. The Holy Spirit can be quenched.

- a). The quenching of the Holy Spirit is mentioned in 1st Thessalonians 5:19-21—*"Do not quench the Spirit."*
- b). To quench means to *"stop burning; to extinguish a fire, snuff out."*⁵ It also means *"To still; to quiet; to repress; as, to quench a passion or emotion; to destroy."*⁶
- c). The late theologian Charles Ryrie noted that *"The Holy Spirit is often likened to fire (Matt. 3:11; Luke 3:16; Acts 2:3). The Spirit is quenched whenever His ministry is stifled in an individual or in the church."*⁷
 - (i) So, consider this—how many times as a child have we quenched our parents' influence or our grandparents' or our favorite uncle/aunt or even a teacher? And when we did something quenchable, what were some of *their* reactions? Maybe disappointment: and in response they may have pulled away because you quenched or stifled their positive influence with your negative response.
 - (ii) This is not some Eastern philosophical belief like some Yin and Yang thing where we are maintaining some balance of harmony with the universe. It's about being obedient unto the Holy Spirit and doing what is right in God's eyes.
- d). We never want to quench the Spirit's influence in our lives. We never want to say no to the fire in our lives.

⁵ James Swanson, *Dictionary of Biblical Languages with Semantic Domains: Greek (New Testament)* (Oak Harbor: Logos Research Systems, Inc., 1997).

⁶ Noah Webster, *Noah Webster's First Edition of An American Dictionary of the English Language*. (Anaheim, CA: Foundation for American Christian Education, 2006).

⁷ Charles Caldwell Ryrie, *Ryrie Study Bible: New American Standard Bible, 1995 Update, Expanded ed.* (Chicago: Moody Press, 1995), 1910.

- e). **And what is the number one thing that can quench the Spirit in your life? SIN! Especially habitual sins. But if our desire is not to sin and please God and stay in communion with God, the Holy Spirit will help.**
 - (i) **And that is the beauty and the necessity of the Holy Spirit in that He will help us fight against sin, even after we stumble and repent from our sins, for He will help us fight against sin. Never forget that He is our Helper and Comforter.**
- f). **You can quench a person's influence with negative results; therefore, the Holy Spirit *is* a person.**

4. The Holy Spirit can be resisted.

- a). **In Acts 7:51 (NLT), just before he met his demise by stoning, Stephen said to his accusers, *"You stubborn people! You are heathen at heart and deaf to the truth. Must you forever resist the Holy Spirit? That's what your ancestors did, and so do you!"***
 - b). **The word resist means to oppose. This is a person who heard the truth about Jesus being the only way to salvation and have a new life, but after the Spirit does His work to convict you of sin and points you to Jesus, you purposefully resist or oppose the Holy Spirit's power of convicting you of sin and thus reject Jesus.**
- F. Now, some may fail to recognize that the Holy Spirit is a person because we equate a person with a physical body. And what is more tangible than a physical body, right!?**
- 1. **A human body is something or someone we can see and touch. It is visible and touchable.**

2. But a spirit? We can't see or touch a spirit. However, as we just saw from the Bible, the Holy Spirit *is* indeed a person, a divine person no less, for the reasons I just shared.
- G. Furthermore, the Word of God reveals the special position the Holy Spirit has in that He is not to be blasphemed.
1. Matthew 12:31-32—*"[31] Therefore I tell you, every sin and blasphemy will be forgiven people, but the blasphemy against the Spirit will not be forgiven. [32] And whoever speaks a word against the Son of Man will be forgiven, but whoever speaks against the Holy Spirit will not be forgiven, either in this age or in the age to come."*
 - a). In other words, the unforgivable sin is the guilty action of unbelievers who willfully and persistently reject the Spirit's drawing them to salvation, thus, refusing to embrace God's love, grace and mercy of the forgiveness extended through Jesus.
 - b). *"It indicates a deliberate and irreversible hardness of heart. Sometimes believers worry that they have accidentally committed this unforgivable sin. But only those who have turned their backs on God and rejected all faith have any need to worry. Jesus said they can't be forgiven—not because their sin is worse than any other but because they will never ask for forgiveness. Whoever rejects the prompting of the Holy Spirit removes himself or herself from the only Person that can lead him or her to repentance and restoration to God."⁸ And what a damning statement—
"removes himself or herself from the only Person (the Holy Spirit) that can lead him or her to repentance and restoration to God."*

⁸ *Life Application Bible Notes (Tyndale, 2007), 1567.*

- c). If anything this shows us the crucial role the Holy Spirit has in God's plan of salvation.

H. Now, the one true God eternally exist in three distinct Persons: God the Father, God the Son and God the Spirit.

1. Just as the Trinity is one of the foundational, essential of the Christian faith, so is believing the deity of the Holy Spirit as God is essential to our Christian faith.
2. Remember, the Triune God of the Bible is one in essence in their divine nature, yet three distinct person. *"The Christian faith says that three distinct persons are the one divine nature in its entirety. The Father possesses all that makes God who He is; the Son possesses all that makes God who He is; and the Spirit possesses all that makes God who He is. We do not worship three gods, each of whom has his own power, his own intelligence, and so on. Instead, we worship three persons who hold in common the same power, the same intelligence, and so on."*⁹
 - a). In Matthew 28:19, Jesus attested to the Triune God which included the Holy Spirit saying, *"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). In 2nd Corinthians 13:14, the apostle Paul concluded his letter attesting the Holy Trinity in writing these words under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit, *"The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ and the love of God and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit be with you all."*

⁹ <https://www.ligonier.org/learn/devotionals/one-essence-three-person> Originally published in *Tabletalk daily Bible study magazine*.

- (i) Here we see the Holy Spirit is God who is distinct from God the Father and God the Son.

II. The Holy Spirit's Directives

A. The Scripture supports the Holy Spirit with the ability to give out directives:

1. In Acts 8:29-30a, the Spirit directed Philip to meet with an Ethiopian Official—
"[29] And the Spirit said to Philip, "Go over and join this chariot." [30a] So Philip ran to him."
 - a). Notice the Holy Spirit speaking, interacting like a person because He is a person!

2. In Acts 12:1-2 we see the Holy Spirit's involvement in the calling of God's people into specific ministry—*"[1] Now there were in the church at Antioch prophets and teachers, Barnabas, Simeon who was called Niger, Lucius of Cyrene, Manaen a lifelong friend of Herod the tetrarch, and Saul. [2] While they were worshiping the Lord and fasting, the Holy Spirit said, "Set apart for me Barnabas and Saul for the work to which I have called them."* The Spirit is speaking!

3. Here's another one in Acts 16:6-7 when the Holy Spirit prevented the apostle Paul and his team from going to the western part of Asia—*"[6] And they went through the region of Phrygia and Galatia, having been forbidden by the Holy Spirit to speak the word in Asia. [7] And when they had come up to Mysia, they attempted to go into Bithynia, but the Spirit of Jesus did not allow them."*
 - a). Notice the Holy Spirit and the Spirit of Jesus showing the unity between the Third and Second Person of the Trinity.

- b). But this also shows that the Spirit has sovereign will over humanity. He willed Paul from doing certain things.
- c). These Scripture texts also shows the personality of the Holy Spirit in that He is a person actively involved in the lives of Christians.

III. The Holy Spirit's Shared Attributes of the Triune God

- A. What are the Holy Spirit's attributes that can help us understand who He is?
- B. Here are some divine attributes that God the Holy Spirit, the Third Person of the Trinity, shares with the Father and the Son:
 - 1. The Holy Spirit is ETERNAL. Hebrews 9:14 it says, *"How much more will the blood of Christ, who through the eternal Spirit offered himself without blemish to God, purify our conscience from dead works to serve the living God."*
 - a). This tells us that He is NOT a created being. His eternal existence is evidence of His deity.
 - 2. But look at Genesis 1:26a; 27-28a—*"[26a] Then God said, "Let us make man in our image, after our likeness... [27] So God created man in his own image, in the image of God he created him; male and female he created them. [28a] And God blessed them."*
 - a). Notice God's use of the plural pronoun for Himself, Us. Many Bible teachers and many Christians throughout the centuries believe and affirm that this is one of the first revelation of the Trinity in the Bible.
 - b). The eternal God the Holy Spirit was involved in creation. Job 33:4 says, *"The Spirit of God has made me, and the breath of the Almighty gives me life."*

- c). Also, in Luke 1:35 the Holy Spirit was personally yet supernaturally involved in the Incarnation of Jesus—*"And the angel answered her, "The Holy Spirit will come upon you, and the power of the Most High will overshadow you; therefore the child to be born will be called holy—the Son of God."* This leads us to the omnipotence of the Holy Spirit.
3. *The Holy Spirit is OMNIPOTENT.* This means He is all-powerful. As we just seen in Scripture, the Holy Spirit's involvement in creation is proof of His omnipotence that He shares with God the Father and God the Son.
4. *The Holy Spirit is OMNIPRESENT.* This means He is everywhere. David wrote about the omnipresence of the Holy Spirit in a well-known Psalm.
- a). In Psalm 139:7-10, David said, *"[7] Where shall I go from your Spirit? Or where shall I flee from your presence? [8] If I ascend to heaven, you are there! If I make my bed in Sheol, you are there! [9] If I take the wings of the morning and dwell in the uttermost parts of the sea, [10] even there your hand shall lead me, and your right hand shall hold me."*
5. *The Holy Spirit INDWELLS believers of Jesus.* Not only is the Spirit omnipresent or everywhere in the universe, but also indwells in all followers of Jesus.
- a). In John 16:16-17, Jesus said, *"[16] And I will ask the Father, and he will give you another Helper, to be with you forever, [17] even the Spirit of truth, whom the world cannot receive, because it neither sees him nor knows him. You know him, for he dwells with you and will be in you."*
6. To solidify the truth of His omnipresence the indwelling of the Holy Spirit *seals* or *marks* all believers in Jesus.

- a). The apostle Paul wrote in Ephesians 1:13-14 (CSB), *"[13] In him you also were sealed with the promised Holy Spirit when you heard the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation, and when you believed. [14] The Holy Spirit is the down payment of our inheritance, until the redemption of the possession, to the praise of his glory."*
7. *The Holy Spirit has the Moral Attribute of God*, such as truth, love, holiness and can be blasphemed.
- a). He is the Spirit of Truth. John 16:13 (NIV)—*"But when he, the Spirit of truth, comes, he will guide you into all the truth. He will not speak on his own; he will speak only what he hears, and he will tell you what is yet to come."*
 - b). The Holy Spirit Has the Attribute of Love. 1st John 4:8 says that God is love. *"Anyone who does not love does not know God, because God is love."*
 - (i) The Spirit shares that same deific attribute of love for Romans 15:30 (CSB) says, *"Now I appeal to you, brothers and sisters, through our Lord Jesus Christ and through the love of the Spirit, to strive together with me in prayers to God on my behalf."*
 - c). The Holy Spirit Has the Attribute of Holiness.
 - (i) Our God is holy, and the Scripture is filled with many passages proclaiming God's holiness, one being found in Isaiah 6:3 and repeated in Revelation 4:8—*"Holy, holy, holy, is the LORD of host or the LORD God Almighty!"*

(ii) "Holy, holy, holy" is known as the trihagion which expresses the intensity and importance of the holiness in the essence or nature of the Godhead.

d). Even the Holy Spirit's name denotes His holy attribute—holy; He is holy.

(i) God's holiness is the key to understanding everything else about Him; this attribute infiltrates all the other attributes.

(ii) And for this reason the Holy Spirit helps us in our sanctification, to be holy as God is holy.

8. The Holy Spirit shares ALL other attributes of the One God we love and serve which we can refer back to our study on the Triune God.

C. But the Holy Spirit is personal in that He is involved in our new life we have in Christ Jesus.

IV. The Holy Spirit And the New Life in Christ.

A. In our new life as believers and followers of Jesus, the Holy Spirit plays a critical role as our forever companion and source of divine strength.

1. It is through His presence that we are guided, comforted, and strengthened to live according to God's will in our lives.

2. He leads us into deeper spiritual understanding, empowers us to overcome challenges, and transforms our hearts and minds to reflect Christ-likeness such as Jesus's love, compassion, kindness and holiness to name a few.

3. With the Holy Spirit dwelling within us, we experience the fullness of life and embark on a journey of spiritual growth and renewal.

- B. And because the Holy Spirit does make a difference in our faith journey, as followers of Jesus, we are encouraged not to walk by the flesh but by the Holy Spirit.
1. Galatians 5:16-17 (CSB)—*"[16] I say, then, walk by the Spirit and you will certainly not carry out the desire of the flesh. [17] For the flesh desires what is against the Spirit, and the Spirit desires what is against the flesh; these are opposed to each other, so that you don't do what you want."*
 2. This is a description of the new life in Christ Jesus through the indwelling and influence of the Holy Spirit.
- C. Furthermore, the new life led by the Holy Spirit will produce attributes of the Holy Spirit in the life of Christians.
1. In Galatians 5:22-23 (CSB), the apostle Paul continued to write, *"[22] But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, [23] gentleness, and self-control."*
 2. This is vital in the Christian life because it is the Holy Spirit who is working these godly attributes in our lives so that we become more Christ-like in our daily life this side of heaven.

V. CONCLUSION

- A. In closing, there's more about the Person of the Holy Spirit which delves into His work which I plan to cover next week.
- B. But nevertheless, because the Holy Spirit is personal, we live out our faith not alone or in our own strength, but with the personal indwelling Holy Spirit in all who are followers of Jesus.
- C. For these reasons based on Scripture,

"We believe in the Holy Spirit, the third person of the Trinity. We believe that He leads us in the way and the truth and the life of the believer. We believe He convicts people of sin, righteousness and judgment, and that He regenerates people so that they would have eternal life. We also believe the Holy Spirit empowers the preaching and teaching of the Gospel" (GRCC Statement of Faith).

To God Be The Glory Forever and Ever. Amen!