

Holy Spirit Study

Introduction
December 2, 2020

The Basics Doctrines About the Holy Spirit

- 1) The Holy Spirit is the “third person” of the Trinity.
 - a) The “Trinity” is a core, required, biblical doctrine that teaches there is one God in three persons. It is based on three basic biblical facts about God:
 - i) There is only one God. Deut 6:4; 32:39; Is 43:11; 44:6-8; 45:5-6,21;
John 5:44; 1Tim 1:17; 6:15; Jude 25
 - ii) Father, Son & Holy Spirit are all God.
 - The Father is God. Matt 6:9; Rom 8:15; 1Cor 8:6; Gal 4:6; Col 1:3; 3:17; 1Pet 1:2
 - The Son is God. John 5:18-25; 20:28; Col 1:19; 2:9; Titus 2:13; 2Pet 1:1
 - The Holy Spirit is God. Matt 28:19; John 16:7-15; Acts 5:3-4; 2Cor 13:14; Gal 4:6
 - iii) Father, Son & Spirit are all different. Matt 28:19; Luke 1:15; John 16:7-13; Rev 5:1-14
 - b) Though the Bible doesn’t used the word “Trinity”, the concept that God is three in unity, or “tri-unity” (hence “Trinity”) is clearly biblical.
 - c) **The Trinity is the doctrine that there is only one God in three coequal and coeternal Persons: Father, Son & Holy Spirit.**
- 2) There is no division in God; there are not three “parts” to God, but three Persons.
 - a) The Holy Spirit isn’t 1/3 God, but fully God.
 - i) The math doesn’t work; it is $1 + 1 + 1 = 1!$
 - ii) All the adjectives that describe God (good, holy, all powerful, all knowing, etc.) all equally apply to all three persons of the one God.
 - iii) To put it simply, there is in God “one what, and three who’s.”
 - b) Again, the Holy Spirit is NOT a “part” of God, but a “person” of the one triune God.
 - i) “Person” here does mean the modern sense of the word as an autonomous self-actualized being, focused on what makes him or her unique.
 - ii) “Person” refers to the ancient idea Latin word “*persona*”, referring to the masks theatre performers would wear. It focuses on an individual in a community.
- 3) This is why the Holy Spirit is not an “it”, but a “He.”
 - a) Like the Father, but unlike the incarnate Son, the Spirit Deut 4:15-16;
John 4:24 isn’t physically a man, but is a spiritual entity.
 - i) Jesus describes the Holy Spirit has a “He.” John 14:16-17; 16:7-8,13-15
 - ii) Jesus says, “*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 said to you.*” – **John 14:26**
 - iii) To call God “she” is to take reject the one true God, to engage in idolatry, and to take His name in vain by rejecting His nature, authority and revelation of Himself.

b) The Holy Spirit is described in “personal” terms:

- i) The Holy Spirit has will (Acts 16:6), intellect (1Cor 2:10; Eph 1:17), knowledge (Rom 8:27; 1Cor 2:11), emotions (Eph 4:30).
- ii) The Holy Spirit teaches (John 14:16,26), testifies (John 15:26), guides (John 16:13), convicts (John 16:8), regenerates (Ezek 36:25-27; John 5:21; Titus 3:5), intercedes (Rom 8:26-27) and commands (Acts 8:29; 13:2-4; 16:6).

4) The differences are about the relations between the Persons (the “who’s”) and not really about the differences about being (“the “what”) of God.

a) The differences are best described by the Congregational “Savoy Declaration”, 2.3:

“In the unity of the God-head there be three Persons, of one substance, power and eternity. God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Spirit. The Father is of none, neither begotten, nor proceeding; the Son is eternally begotten of the Father; the Holy Spirit eternally proceeding from the Father and the Son. Which doctrine of the Trinity is the foundation of all our communion with God, and comfortable dependence upon Him.”

b) To put it simply:

- i) The Father is enthroned in heaven **ordains** all that comes about.
- ii) The Son **accomplishes** the Father’s commands.
- iii) The Spirit radiating out **applies** what the Father & Son have done.

c) We see this throughout Scripture:

- i) Creation in **Genesis 1:1-3** = the Father orders the creation, the Son (the Word of God, the “said” of Gen 1:3) accomplishes it and the Spirit applies it to creation. For all of creation is upheld by the Holy Spirit.
- ii) Jesus’ birth in **Luke 1-2** = the Father decrees it (Luke 1:31-33), the Son accomplishes it by becoming human and being born (Luke 2:1-14) and the Spirit applies it by miraculously impregnating Mary (Luke 1:35).
- iii) Jesus baptism in **Luke 3:21-22** = the Father speaks from heaven declaring who the Son is, the Son accomplishes the Father’s will by being baptized, while the Holy Spirit applies the Father’s blessing by coming upon Jesus like a dove.

5) The differences are seen especially in salvation:

- a) The Father decrees salvation for His people from the beginning of creation, while the Son accomplishes it by becoming human and dieing on a cross.
- b) The Holy Spirit applies salvation to creation, creating God’s church.
- c) **Galatians 4:4-6** – *“But when the fullness of the time came, God sent forth His Son, born of a woman, born under the Law, so that He might redeem those who were under the Law, that we might receive the adoption as sons. Because you are sons, God has sent forth the Spirit of His Son into our hearts, crying, ‘Abba! Father!’”*
- d) So, the Holy Spirit is the person of God that goes into creation and gives life, in particular He gives new life to God’s people.
 - i) He makes Christians born again. Titus 3:5; 1Pet 1:23; John 3:6
Which leads to faith, repentance, justification, adoption, etc. Titus 3:3-8

- ii) He gives holiness (i.e. sanctification) to the Christian. 1Cor 1:30; 2Thes 2:13; Heb 10:14-15; 1Pet 1:2
- iii) He intercedes for the Christian, helping us in our weakness. Rom 8:26
- iv) He helps us to know the things of Christ, including creating the inspired Scriptures. John 14:16; 2Peter 1:21
- e) This is why blasphemy against the Holy Spirit is the only unforgivable sin. (Matt 12:30-32; Luke 12:10-12) This refers to the life long rejection of what the Holy Spirit does.

Ponderings For Next Class

- 1) There is a lot of confusion in the modern church about the Holy Spirit, as seen by such questions "*do you have the Holy Spirit?*", "*is the Holy Spirit working in your life?*", "*have you been baptized in the Holy Spirit?*" and/or "*are you filled with the Holy Spirit?*"
- 2) Does the Holy Spirit speak to us as individuals outside of biblical revelation?
- 3) Many of these things come down to a simple theological question: Which comes first, the Holy Spirit or our actions?
 - a) Is it, the Holy Spirit is upon me and I have done this good thing?
 - b) Or, is it, if I do this good thing then the Holy Spirit will come upon me?
 - c) How you answer this question will greatly influence how you view the Holy Spirit.