

## III.3. Lambs to Rams: Holy Spirit

So much misinformation has been written, taught and believed concerning Holy Spirit. Who or what He is, what He does and how He operates even today, has led to so much controversy that the truth has been so twisted. So much false teaching is done on this subject.

Holy Spirit is a divine personality equal in power and authority with God the Father and God the Son. He is not just an influence as some may believe. He can be grieved by our actions as Paul noted in Eph 4:30. (*See also Isa 63:10*) Jesus referred to Holy Spirit as singular in number, using the personal pronoun, masculine gender in identifying Him (*Jn 16:13-14*). He has attributes belonging to personality.

He has a mind: “And He that searcheth the hearts knoweth what is **the mind of the Spirit**, because He maketh intercession for the saints according to *the will of God*.” (*Rom 8:27*) (*Emp. added*)

He has the ability to know: “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.” (*1Co 2:10-11*)

He has the ability to communicate: “Now the Spirit **speaketh expressly**, that in the latter times some shall depart from the faith, giving heed to seducing spirits, and doctrines of devils;” (*1Ti 4:1*) (*Emp. added*)

He has the power to love: “Now I beseech you, brethren, for the Lord Jesus Christ's sake, and for **the love of the Spirit**, that ye strive together with me in *your* prayers to God for me;” (*Rom 15:30*) (*Emp. added*)

Holy Spirit reveals the mystery of Christ. The word ‘mystery’ means that which men could not know apart from revelation.

The ‘mystery’ was revealed by the Spirit and the revelation was made in words which in turn were written by the inspired writers and understood by mankind. The Spirit had revealed God’s plan for saving man, and this revelation was made in human language. Of the twenty-two times the word ‘mystery’ is used in the New Testament it deals mostly with bridging the gap between Jew and Gentile through the Gospel. (*Rom 1:16*)

Through this revealing, the Spirit makes known the promise of God which is “now revealed unto His holy apostles and prophets by the Spirit; That the Gentiles should be fellowheirs, and of the same body (*church*), and partakers of His promise in Christ by the Gospel” (*Eph 3:5-6*).

Holy Spirit is the One by Whom Christians have access to God (*Eph 2:18*). It is by the Spirit that we have strength “in the inner man” (*Eph 3:16*). He is the One through Whom saints become a habitation of God (*Eph 2:22*). God cannot dwell in us but through the Spirit’s teaching about Him (*Col 3:16*). He delivered the message to holy men of God who then penned those inspired, God breathed words about Him (*2 Pet 1:21*).

How does He accomplish His purpose? How did He reveal the mystery? He provided and guided the revelation of God’s will (*Eph 3:5*). The Lord promised that the Holy Spirit would come to teach, guide, show, and bring to remembrance to the apostles what the Lord had taught them (*Jn 14:25-26; 15:26*). The apostles preached the Gospel “with the Holy Ghost (*Spirit*) sent down from Heaven” (*1 Pet 1:12*). The revelation was made in human language subject to an intelligent proclamation, “seeing you have purified your souls in obeying the truth through the Spirit” (*1 Pet 1:22*). It was written in statements that are understandable.

Eph 3:3 How that by revelation He made known unto me the mystery; (as I **wrote afore** in few words, 4 Whereby, **when ye read, ye may understand** my knowledge in **the mystery of Christ**) 5 Which in other ages was not made known unto the sons of men, as it is now revealed

unto His holy apostles and prophets **by the Spirit**; (*Emp. added*)

In writing to the church in Ephesus, Paul said that God's word would "build them up", i.e., strengthen them. The Holy Spirit revealed that God's word would strengthen them in the "inner man" which everyone has. It was "breathed into" man from the beginning (*Gen 2:7*) and is the part of man that Satan cannot touch. It is that "inner man" that is influenced to do good over the "outward man" which is that part of a person that is influenced to do evil (*human nature*).

2Co 4:16 For which cause we faint not; but **though our outward man perish**, yet the **inward man is renewed day by day**. (*Emp. added*)

2Co 5:1 For we know that if our earthly house of *this* tabernacle (*Gk.4636-human body*) were dissolved, we have a building **of God**, an **house not made with hands** (*Gk.886-unmanufactured- Dan 2:34, 45*), **eternal in the heavens** (*Dan 2:44*). 2 For in this we groan, earnestly desiring to be clothed upon (*1 Cor 15:53- concerning the resurrected body that all will receive*) with our house (*Gk.3613-residence*) which is from Heaven (*1 Thes 4:16*): 3 If so be that being clothed we shall not be found naked. 4 For we that are in *this* tabernacle do groan, being burdened: not for that we would be unclothed, but clothed upon, that mortality (*Gk.2349-labile to die*) might be swallowed up of life (*1 Cor 15:54*). 5 Now He that hath wrought us for the selfsame thing is God, Who also hath given unto us the **earnest** (*Gk.728-pledge, part of the purchase money...given in advance as security for the rest.*) **of the Spirit** (*Act 2:38*). 6 Therefore *we are* always confident, knowing that, whilst we are at home in the body, we are absent from the Lord: 7 (For we walk by faith, not by sight:) (*Emp. added*)

The "inner man" can be strong in the face of Satan, temptation and evil, but only by taking the "sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God" (*Eph 6:17*). Once we have heard, believed and

obeyed the word of truth, the Gospel of our salvation, we are “sealed (*Gk.4972- to stamp [with a signet...] for security or preservation*) with the Holy Spirit of promise” (*Eph 1:13*).

The Holy Spirit is not a “glorified it” nor is He an “influence” that guides us through our everyday affairs. He is a Person (*1 of 3 in the Godhead*) Who uses means to accomplish His mission. He uses the sword (*the word of God*) to save souls (*James 1:21; 1 Pet 1:22-23*), to furnish the saint for all good works (*2 Tim 3:16-17*) and to judge (*2 Tim 4:1-2*). He does not “dwell in” the Christian in any way that differs from the other two Persons of the Godhead. If God and Christ dwell in the saint, then in the same way the Spirit thus dwells although His indwelling has a specific role to play in the eternal inheritance of the saints (*Eph 1:14*).

Rom 8:9 You, however, are not in the flesh but in the Spirit, if in fact the Spirit of God **dwells in you**. Anyone who **does not have** the Spirit of Christ **does not belong** to Him. (*Emp. added*)

1Co 3:16 Do you not know that you are God's temple and that God's Spirit **dwells in you**? (*Emp. added*)

“It may be concluded from Paul’s words that the Holy Spirit dwells in God’s children. If the Spirit is not present in people who are accountable for their actions, they are unsaved.”

Brad Price

Rom 8:10 But if Christ is **in you**, although the body is dead because of sin, the Spirit is life because of righteousness. (*Emp. added*)

“In the 10<sup>th</sup> verse, Paul spoke of Christ being ‘in’ us. The Spirit actually dwells within a Christian and Christ dwells in our hearts by faith (*Eph 3:17*). Deity is willing to be in fellowship with anyone who is saved because the ‘body is dead’ to sin (6:11).”

Brad Price

Rom 8:11 If the Spirit of Him (*God the Father*) Who raised Jesus from the dead **dwells in you**, He Who raised Christ Jesus from the dead will also give life to your mortal bodies through His Spirit Who **dwells in you**. (*Emp. added*)

“In verse 11, Paul resumed his discussion of the Spirit’s dwelling place. The Spirit is ‘in’ us, and this is described with the present tense (*dwells*’).

The power of the Father will be used to raise all people (*Joh 5:28-29*), but the Spirit will have a special role that will be limited to the saved.”

Brad Price

Rom 8:13 For if you live according to the flesh you will die, but if by the Spirit you put to death the deeds of the body, you will live. 14 For all who are **led by** the Spirit of God are sons of God. (*Emp. added*)

“While most agree that the Spirit leads Christians, many disagree on how this is done. Some claim the Holy Spirit provides the saved with special feelings, dreams, or revelations. Others believe the Spirit leads them only through His word. This matter should not be complicated because God is a God of peace, not confusion (*1Co 14:33*).”

In order to understand how the Spirit leads people, we may use a comparison. People walk either according to the flesh or according to the Spirit. If someone is living after the flesh, how are they led? Is Satan (*who is the center of the fleshly life*) actively appearing to people and speaking to them? Does he send the unsaved visions and dreams? Is he whispering in the ears of those who are lost?

There is nothing miraculous about being led by the flesh. People see sin, it is attractive, and they succumb to it. A similar thing is true for the Spirit. People have God’s word, it is attractive to them, and they follow it. Because Paul used the present tense, Christians continuously use its direction and guidance. Paul also applied the present tense in both parts of

verse 14: If we are continuously led by the Holy Spirit (*through His word*), we are continuously (*present tense*) ‘sons of God.’ Since this is true the opposite is implied: those who do not continually abide by what is stated in the Word of God are not God’s people. We must be led by the Holy Spirit through His word because the Spirit’s sword (*power*) is the word of God (*Eph 6:17*).”

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Jesus once told Nicodemus that in order to “enter the kingdom of God” one must be “born of water and the Spirit” (*Jn 3:3-5*), a teaching that Nicodemus should have understood (*Jn 3:10*). Paul would later explain that our sins are cleansed “with the washing of water by the word” (*Eph 5:26*) meaning that it is only through the Spirit inspired word that this sanctification (*cleansing*) is possible and “not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to His mercy He saved us, by the washing (*Gk.3067- baptism*) of regeneration (*Gk.3824-rebirth, spiritual renovation*), and renewing (*Gk.342-renovation*) of the Holy Ghost” (*Titus 3:5*). This “renovation” of the Spirit means He is the author of this inward renewal.

On the day of the feast of Pentecost which happened fifty days after Jesus’ crucifixion Peter delivered a sermon that pricked the hearts of the Jews that were present during Passover. When they asked Peter and the rest of the apostles what they should do, realizing it was in their ignorance that they called for their Messiah to be crucified, Peter answered that they needed to repent of their sins and have them washed away, at which point they would receive the gift of the Holy Spirit (*Act 2:37-39; see also 1 Jn 2:25 concerning the “promise”*). This was not a miraculous indwelling although certain phenomenal gifts of the Spirit were passed on to many by the apostles’ hands (*Act 8:18*) and only as the Spirit saw fit (*Heb 2:4*). These gifts were to serve as proof that the message being preached was in fact from God (*Act 14:3*). They ceased to exist once the apostles had all passed and “that which is perfect” (*1 Cor 13:10*) came in the form of the canonized word of God that we have today in the form of the Bible.

### III.3. Questions

1. True or false: Holy Spirit is a Divine Personality, One of the Three Persons of the Godhead. a) true; b) false; c) the text does not say.
2. What is His role in saving mankind? a) He reveals the mystery of Christ through the word of God; b) He performs miracles through Christians today; c) He personally invites a sinner to be saved.
3. What part of man does He influence? a) the human nature; b) the 'outer' man; c) the 'inner' man.
4. Through what avenue does He influence? a) the mind; b) the word of God; c) miracles
5. True or false: Holy Spirit is the guarantee of our eternal inheritance. a) true; b) false; c) the text does not say.
6. Why did Jesus say that we need to be "born again"? a) to enter the kingdom of God; b) to be successful in this life; c) both 'a' and 'b'.
7. If "washing" refers to baptism, what does "by the word" refer to? a) the Spirit inspired word; b) what comes from Bible study; c) what has been understood.
8. True or false: Through baptism the Spirit is the Author of an inward renewal. a) true; b) false; c) the text does not say.

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