

THE HOLY SPIRIT AND THE TRINITY

TITLES OF THE HOLY SPIRIT

Descriptive Titles of the Holy Spirit

The Holy Spirit has many titles that are descriptive of His attributes and ministry:

- ***Spirit of Promise*** "...you were sealed with the Holy Spirit of promise..." Ephes 1:13
- ***Counsellor*** "I will pray the Father, and he will give you another Counsellor, to be with you for ever..." Jn 14:16
- ***Eternal Spirit*** "...of Christ, who through the eternal Spirit offered Himself without spot to God..." Heb 9:14
- ***Willing Spirit*** "Restore unto me the joy of thy salvation; and uphold me with thy free (willing) spirit." Ps 51:12
- ***Power of the Highest*** "The Holy Spirit will come upon you, and the power of the Highest will overshadow you..." Lk 1:35
- ***Spirit of Adoption*** "...you received the Spirit of adoption by whom we cry out "Abba, Father." Rom 8:15
- ***Spirit of Glory*** 1 Pet 4:14. "...blessed are you, for the Spirit of glory and of God rests upon you."
- ***Spirit of Grace and Supplication*** "...I will pour on the house of David and on the inhabitants of Jerusalem the Spirit of grace and supplication..." Zec 12:10.
- ***Spirit of Holiness*** "...declared to be the Son of God with power according to the Spirit of holiness..." Rom 1:4.
- ***Spirit of Judgment*** "...and purged the blood of Jerusalem from her midst, by the spirit of judgment..." Isa 4:4,
- ***Spirit of Life*** "the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus has made me free from the law of sin and death." Rom 8:2.
- ***Spirit of Prophecy*** "For the testimony of Jesus is the spirit of prophecy." Rev 19:10.
- ***Spirit of Counsel-- Spirit of Knowledge-- Spirit of Might-- Spirit of Understanding-- Spirit of Wisdom*** "The Spirit of the LORD shall rest upon Him, the Spirit of wisdom and understanding, the Spirit of counsel and might, the Spirit of knowledge and (teacher) of the fear of the LORD." Isa 11:2

Relationship Titles

The Spirit of God

The Holy Spirit is often referred to as "**the Spirit of God**." This is more a title than a description.

"When He had been baptised, Jesus came up immediately from the water; and behold, the heavens were opened to Him, and He saw the Spirit of God (that is to say, the Holy Spirit sent forth by God) descending like a dove and alighting on Him." Matt 3:16.

The title "**Spirit of God**," is used when the action of the Holy Spirit is associated with God. In this case, just as He sent forth the Spirit to anoint the Old Testament prophets, He now sent the Spirit forth to anoint Jesus the Prophet.

Other examples: "**But if I cast out demons by the Spirit of God, surely the kingdom of God has come upon you.**" Matt 12 :28.

"**For as many as are led by the Spirit of God, these are sons of God.**" Rom 8:14.

The Spirit of Him or His Spirit

The use of the personal pronoun "**Him**" or "**His**" are again titles—the equivalent of "**the Spirit of God**."

"**But if the Spirit of Him who raised Jesus from the dead dwells in you, He who raised Christ from the dead will also give life to your mortal bodies through His Spirit who dwells in you.**" Rom 8:11.

"**...that He would grant you, according to the riches of His glory, to be strengthened with might through His Spirit in the inner man.**" Eph 3:16.

Why was the Holy Spirit called the Spirit of God?

- The Holy Spirit is submitted to God, and under His control.
- He is the vehicle through whom God operates in power.
- He reveals to us the attributes of God—His love and faithfulness; as our healer; our provider, etc.
- In particular He reveals God to us as God our Father.
- He is the vehicle through which God manifests His presence and nature in us.
- The Holy Spirit guides us into God's rest of faith, where we learn to abandon our circumstances into His keeping. When all of our circumstances are delivered into God's hands, He manifests His power and glory through the Spirit in all and through all.

The Spirit of Christ

In a similar manner that the Holy Spirit is given the title "**the Spirit of God**," He is also given the title "**the Spirit of Christ**."

"**But you are not in the flesh but in the Spirit, if indeed the Spirit of God dwells in you. Now if anyone does not have the Spirit of Christ, he is not His.**" Rom 8:9

"**For I know that this will turn out for my deliverance through your prayer and the supply of the Spirit of Jesus Christ...**" Phil 1:19.

The Spirit of His Son

"**And because you are sons, God has sent forth the Spirit of His Son into your hearts, crying out, "Abba, Father!"**" Gal 4:6. Again this is used as a title.

The titles, "Spirit of God," and "Spirit of Christ," reflect the close relationship between the parties of the Godhead.

Why the Spirit of Christ?

- The Holy Spirit was active in the Old Testament, speaking through the prophets, and manifesting signs and wonders to bring about God's purposes. The title "Spirit of

Christ" differentiates the activity of the Spirit from that of the Old Testament dispensation.

- The Holy Spirit replaced Christ's physical presence, so that He could now be omnipresent in His brethren.
- The Holy Spirit is the Spirit who bears witness to Jesus.
- He discerns the things of Christ—the things Christ wants us to know concerning our personal relationship with Him, and then declares them to us.
- The Holy Spirit is the Spirit of the cross of Jesus Christ. By His working, He brings us to a state of sharing in the suffering and death of Christ, and thereby bringing about death to our flesh.
- He is the vehicle through which Christ manifests His presence in us. Through the vehicle of the Holy Spirit, Jesus is now manifested in us in resurrection power as the Exalted One. Through His indwelling presence, we are enabled to live Christ's victory over the world, the flesh, and the devil. To the mature believer, Jesus has, in a practical sense, become his life.

THE HOLY SPIRIT is a separate PRESENCE in the Godhead

The Holy Spirit proceeds from Beside the Father

"But when the Helper comes, whom I shall send to you from the Father, the Spirit of truth who proceeds from the Father, He will testify of Me." John 15:26.

The Greek word *'para'* which is here translated 'from,' is more correctly translated 'from near.' Thus the text should read, **"the Spirit of truth who proceeds from near, or beside, the Father"**—rather than from within the Father.

The Holy Spirit has a Separate Identity and Will

"However, when He, the Spirit of truth (the Holy Spirit) has come, He will guide you into all truth; for He will not speak on His own authority (suggesting that He has individual authority), but whatever He (Himself as and individual) hears He will speak; and He will tell you things to come. He will glorify Me, for He will take of what is Mine and declare it to you. All things that the Father has are Mine. Therefore I said that He will take of Mine and declare it to you." John 16:13.

"And anyone who speaks a word against the Son of Man, it will be forgiven him; but to him who blasphemes against the Holy Spirit, it will not be forgiven." Luke 12:10. This indicates that there is a difference in the way we are judged in relation to sins against Jesus and the Holy Spirit.

The Holy Spirit Glorifies Christ

The Holy Spirit has the specific and individual role of glorifying Christ. **"He will glorify Me, for He will take of what is Mine and declare it to you.** John 16:13-14.

The Holy Spirit Discerns the Mind of the Father and of Christ

"But God has revealed them to us through His Spirit. For the Spirit searches all things, yes, the deep things of God. For what man knows the things of a man except the spirit of the man which is in him? Even so no one knows the things of God except the Spirit of God." 1 Cor 2:10-11.

From *Jamieson, Fausset, and Brown Commentary*: "**[Deep things of God] His divine Being, attributes, and counsels. The Spirit delights to explore the infinite depths of the divine mind, and then reveal them to us as far as is for our profit. This proves the personality and the God-head of the Holy Spirit.**"

The Holy Spirit Portrayed in Pictures of the Throne

A current teaching suggests that because the Holy Spirit is referred to as "**the Spirit of God**" or "**the Spirit of Christ**," there is no third person in the Godhead. It proposes that the Holy Spirit is only a manifestation of God's or Christ's Spirit, and that if one could view the throne of God, he would only see God and Christ. To give grounds for their assumption, they say that nowhere in the bible does it say that we are to pray to the Holy Spirit, or worship the Holy Spirit.

First of all, picturing the Godhead is beyond our human capacity. That is why biblical pictures of the throne are framed in symbols and nebulous phrases. E.g.

"...a throne set in heaven, and One sat on the throne. And He who sat there was like a jasper and a sardius stone in appearance; and there was a rainbow around the throne, in appearance like an emerald." Rev 4:2-6.

"the likeness of the throne was a likeness with the appearance of a man high above it." (Ezek 1:26).

Nevertheless, in these representations, the Holy Spirit is separately portrayed. For example:

- **"John, to the seven churches which are in Asia: Grace to you and peace from Him who is and who was and who is to come, and from the seven Spirits who are before His throne..."** Rev 1:4.

"And from the throne proceeded lightnings, thunderings, and voices. Seven lamps of fire were burning before the throne, which are the seven Spirits of God." Rev 4:5. The "**seven Spirits**" is a figurative reference to the infinite completeness and universal power of the Holy Spirit. In Zechariah the seven spirits are referred to as "**the eyes of the LORD, which scan to and fro throughout the whole earth.**" (Zech 3:9,& 4:10).

THE HOLY TRINITY IN US

Viewing point *of* SUBSTANCE *rather than* PURPOSE

The Substance of the Godhead

Our preoccupation with the power of the Holy Spirit, and Him being the vehicle through which God and Jesus work in the church, has caused us to view His position in us as largely independent from the Father and Son. We tend to see God and Jesus enthroned in heaven, and the Holy Spirit as their representative on earth, carrying out their orders.

To gain the right perspective, it is necessary to change our viewing point from one of individuality and works, to one of the substance and unity of the Godhead. The obvious starting point is that each member of the Godhead is SPIRIT. They are one substance—one SPIRIT.

In comparing the spiritual blindness of the Old Testament Jews to the liberty brought by the Spirit to the church, Paul writes, "**Now the Lord is the Spirit; and where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is liberty.**" 2 Cor 3:17.

Some have used this passage to claim that the Holy Spirit does not exist as a separate identity. They say that the Holy Spirit is the Spirit of the risen Christ. But Paul is saying that Jesus and the Holy Spirit are one—one in substance and purpose, and in their essence or attributes. He readily accepted the reality of the three personages of the Godhead, as is seen in the closing verse of the same letter. **"The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, and the love of God, and the communion of the Holy Spirit be with you all."** 2 Cor 13:14.

Do They Co-inhabit Each Other?

If we acknowledge the spiritual oneness of the members of the Godhead, the question that follows is, do they remain separated, or do they co-inhabit each other, whilst retaining their individuality?

In looking at the possibility of the second alternative, we will first look at our own regeneration, in which our spirit was inhabited by the Holy Spirit. Jesus promised His disciples, **"the Spirit of truth, whom the world cannot receive, because it neither sees Him nor knows Him; but you know Him, for He (now) dwells with you and will be in you"** John 14:17

The Holy Spirit is now in us, inhabiting our spirit. We acknowledge His existence in us, and yet we don't feel that the individuality of our spirit has been compromised. The Holy Spirit and our spirit are one substance, interacting with one another, yet each involved in its own individual purposes.

Jesus was Filled with the Holy Spirit

Luke records that **"Jesus, being filled with the Holy Spirit, returned from the Jordan and was led by the Spirit into the wilderness."** Luke 4:1.

Jesus the man, was as we are—a tripartite being, having body, soul, and His own Spirit. The difference was that his Spirit was not subject to the Fall and was therefore undefiled.

If, as the Scriptures say, Jesus was **"filled with the Holy Spirit,"** then the Holy Spirit indwelt and interacted with Jesus' Spirit without compromising its individuality.

God was in Jesus Christ

When we talk about the Spirit of God, we are referring to the Holy Spirit in His association with God. However when we talk about God being in Christ, we are referring to His omnipresent Spirit Being abiding in Christ. E.g.

"Now all things are of God, who has reconciled us to Himself through Jesus Christ, and has given us the ministry of reconciliation, that is, that God (the Father) was in Christ reconciling the world to Himself.." 2 Cor 5:18-19.

"Do you not believe that I am in the Father, and the Father in Me? The words that I speak to you I do not speak on My own authority; but the Father who dwells in Me does the works." John 14:10.

The FATHER and SON in the HOLY SPIRIT are in US

The apostle John said that we can be assured that we have the presence of God in us because we have been given the Holy Spirit. **"By this we know that we abide in Him, and He in us, because He has given us of His Spirit."** I Jn 4:13.

From this we deduce that the omnipresent Father is in the Holy Spirit, and consequently in us. Moreover, Jesus made it clear that both He and the Father would dwell in us.

He said, "**If anyone loves Me, he will keep My word; and My Father will love him, and We will come to him and make Our home with him.**" John 14:23.

"**At that day you will know that I am in My Father, and you in Me, and I in you.**" John 14:20.

He prayed to the Father that we "**...all may be one, as You, Father, are in Me, and I in You; that they also may be one in Us, that the world may believe that You sent Me.**" John 17:21.

Not the Representative—the Actual Presence

The apostle Paul writes, "**But you are not in the flesh but in the Spirit, if indeed the Spirit of God dwells in you. Now if anyone does not have the Spirit of Christ, he is not His. And if Christ is in you, the body is dead because of sin, but the Spirit is life because of righteousness.**" Rom 8:9-10.

Paul states that we should all have "**the Spirit of Christ,**" that is, the Holy Spirit.

He goes on, "**And if Christ is in you.**" In other words, if we have the Holy Spirit in us, then we have the actual presence of Christ in us. He, as an omnipresent Spirit Being, is in the Holy Spirit, in us.

Paul called the presence of Christ in us a mystery. "**...this mystery...which is Christ in you, the hope of glory.**" Col 1:27. He also prayed to the Father, asking Him to strengthen us in our spirits so that we would understand the mystery, "**...that Christ may dwell in your hearts through faith...**" Eph 3:16-17.

It is important that we open our hearts to accept the knowledge of the actual presence of the Father and Son in us, because it opens the door for us to enter into a personal relationship with them. It is the basis for our abiding in Christ, and He in us—according to His instruction: "**Abide (remain constantly) in (union with) Me, and I in you.**" John 15:4-5.

Our worship is generally directed to the universal Godhead in heaven, but our individual fellowship is with the Godhead within us.

UNITY *in* OPERATION *of the* GODHEAD *in* US

Nicodemus, a ruler of the Jews, questioned Jesus about the spiritual nature and power of His ministry. He "**said to Him, "Rabbi, we know that You are a teacher come from God for no one can do these signs that You do unless God is with him."**" John 3:2.

In replying, Jesus explained the difference between His ministry to that of worldly teachers. "**Most assuredly, I say to you, We (the Godhead) speak what We know and testify what We have seen, and you do not receive Our witness. If I have told you earthly things and you do not believe, how will you believe if I tell you heavenly things? No one has ascended to heaven but He who came down from heaven, that is, the Son of Man who is in heaven.**" John 3:11-13.

Jesus could say that He was in heaven because He was one Spirit with the Godhead, who was simultaneously in heaven and yet in Him.

Summing up so far

- Father, Son, and Holy Spirit are One, having the same spirit substance, one in essence, and yet are different personalities.
- The Holy Spirit indwells and interacts with our spirits.
- On earth, Jesus was filled with the Spirit and immersed in the Spirit.

- The actual presence of God and Jesus Christ are in the Holy Spirit.
- Because the Holy Spirit is in us, the Father and Son are in us.
- When we are immersed in the Spirit, we may know the presence of the Father, Son and Holy Spirit, actively involved in our circumstances.
- Receiving by faith the presence of the Father and Son in us, as distinct from their position on the throne in heaven, opens the way for us to have a personal relationship with them.

Because of the inadequacy of our carnal minds, we tend to separate the members of the Godhead to the degree that we worship three disunited Gods. The mystery of the Godhead is that there is one God, of one spiritual substance, manifested in three personalities, who are separate, and yet ONE.

If we view the inter-relationships of the personages in the Godhead from the point of view of their one substance--as omnipresent Spirit Beings inhabiting each other, and always one in purpose, we may now accept that we have the presence of the Trinity in us. This is quite different from just having the Holy Spirit, and Him manifesting the presence of the Father and Son.

We have the Holy Trinity in us—Father, Son, and Spirit. As Spirit Beings, they have the one substance, with the same essence, yet are individual in person. The Holy Spirit is the working aspect of Trinity in us. He is our teacher and guide. The Father and Son are the authorities or directors of the Spirit.

The glorified Jesus is the head director of all things to the Church, and the Holy Spirit is His instrument. He baptises us in the Spirit, and empowers and directs our ministries. Through the Spirit He shows us the reality of the Trinity in us. By the Spirit He prepares the ground, imparts the truth, and gives us the faith to receive His presence in our hearts. It is He who establishes His kingdom in us. By the Spirit He leads us on our spiritual pilgrimage through the veil of His sacrificial flesh and shed blood to the abiding presence of God as Father. The Father, through the Spirit, draws us to Himself, where we may find rest for our souls in His Fatherhood.

Whereas the workings of the Trinity have been individualised in the paragraph above, the truth is that there is a fluid unity in their operation as the Father and Son, in the Holy Spirit, in us, carry out their work and purposes.

Why Did Jesus Have to be Glorified before He Could Send forth the Holy Spirit?

"But this He spoke concerning the Spirit, whom those believing in Him would receive; for the Holy Spirit was not yet given, because Jesus was not yet glorified (rendered glorious by the Father after His resurrection and ascension)." John 7:39.

In his gospel, John plainly stated that the coming of the Holy Spirit depended on

- Jesus being crucified for the sake of mankind,
- being resurrected and going to the Father,
- and being glorified by the Father.

Before coming to earth, Jesus was **"in the form of God..."** and **"equal with God."** (Phil 2:6). In order to do the will of the Father in reconciling the world back to Himself, He emptied Himself of his divinity and fullness of His Spirit, making Himself totally dependent on the other members of the Godhead. He **"made Himself of no reputation, taking the form of a**

bondsman, and coming in the likeness of men. And being found in appearance as a man, He humbled Himself and became obedient to the point of death, even the death of the cross." Phil 2:5-8.

God's response to Christ's "**obedien(ce) to the point of death,**" in delivering mankind from sin, is shown in the following part of the reading.

"Therefore God also has highly exalted Him and given Him the name which is above every name, that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of those in heaven, and of those on earth, and of those under the earth, and that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father." Phil 2:9-11.

This reading shows the first part of Christ's glorification. All authority has been subjected to Him, in heaven, on earth, and those in Satan's domain. He was made head of the church. **"And He God) put all things under His (Christ's) feet, and gave Him to be head over all things to the church, which is His body, the fullness of Him who fills all in all."** Eph 1:22-23. God has proclaimed Christ's supreme authority. He is now working, through the power of the Holy Spirit, to put all things under His feet. **"Now when all things are made subject to Him, then the Son Himself will also be subject to Him who put all things under Him, that God may be all in all."** 1 Cor 15:28.

The second part of His glorification relates to the restoration of His divinity, and the glory He had shared with the Father. It was to this end He prayed before His departure from earth, **"And now, O Father, glorify Me together with Yourself, with the glory which I had with You before the world was."** John 17:5.

This prayer originated from the Father's heart, **"for it pleased the Father that in Him should all fullness dwell."** Col 1:19. "All fullness" relates specifically to the Godhead. **"For in Him dwells all the fullness of the Godhead bodily; and you are complete in Him, who is the head of all principality and power."** Col 2:9-10.

Now, all the fullness of the Father and the Spirit indwell the glorified Lord Jesus Christ, who is now proclaimed, **"the head of all principality and power."** This was God's indication to the world that He who they had crucified was His **"Beloved in whom (His) soul is well pleased,"** (Matt 12:18), and that it was through the smiting of the rock, **"and that Rock was Christ,"**(1 Cor 10:4), that the waters of the Spirit now gush out.

By the Cross Man was made Holy and Righteous

The other aspect of Christ's glorification that prepared the way for the sending forth the Spirit was that through His sacrificial death on the cross, man was delivered from the stain of sin, and made holy and righteous vessels in whom the Holy Spirit could dwell.

The Age of the Risen and Glorified Lord

There is a common misconception that the church age is the age of the Spirit. It has resulted in an unwarranted worshipping of the Spirit, and an idolatrous longing for tokens of the Spirit's power. The Holy Spirit does not seek His own glory. Jesus said, **"He will glorify Me."** Jn 16:14.

We should never lose sight of the fact that it was God's good pleasure to glorify Jesus, so that He might have the pre-eminence. **"And He is the head of the body, the church, who is the beginning, the firstborn from the dead, that in all things He may have the pre-eminence. For it pleased the Father that in Him all the fullness should dwell."** Col 1:18-19. This is the age of the glorified Lord.

As "**Head of all things to the church,**" it is Jesus who oversees all things and directs all things, the Holy Spirit being His instrument. "**And they went out and preached everywhere, the Lord working with them and confirming the word through the accompanying signs.**" Mark 16:20. And again: "**Therefore they stayed there a long time, speaking boldly in the Lord, who was bearing witness to the word of His grace, granting signs and wonders to be done by their hands.**" Acts 14:3.

It is Jesus who pours out the Spirit on the church. "**Therefore being exalted to the right hand of God, and having received from the Father the promise of the Holy Spirit, He poured out this which you now see and hear.**" Acts 2:33.

It is Jesus who baptises us in the Spirit, and continually refills us—empowering every ministry. It is Jesus who establishes His kingdom in us, and who leads us to know the abiding presence of God. It is He who instructs the Spirit, who does not "**speak on His own authority, but whatever He hears (from Jesus) He will speak.**" John 16:13.

It is He who will fill all things with His fullness—the "**fullness of the Godhead bodily.**" "**He who descended is also the One who ascended far above all the heavens, that He might fill all things.**" Eph 4:10.

It is now the glorified Lord Jesus Christ who fills us individually, and as the church, with His fullness—that is the "**fullness of the Godhead bodily.**"

Throughout the church age His fullness has by and large been restricted to individuals. However, at the close of the age, at the time of the restoration of all things, His glory will return to the church, and the church will be filled with the fullness of His glory.