

A Study of.....

# THE HOLY SPIRIT

West Sparta  
Church of Christ

Wednesday Night Bible Study

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(Student's Name)



# A STUDY OF THE HOLY SPIRIT

## INTRODUCTION:

1. A study of the Holy Spirit is needed for two reasons:
  - a. The Bible has much to say about the existence, the nature and the work of the Holy Spirit.
  - b. There is much confusion in the religious world about this vital subject.
2. This study involves two important matters related to the Spirit.
  - a. This study will deal with the nature of the Holy Spirit - what He is like.
  - b. This study will deal with the work of the Holy Spirit - what He does.
3. The term "spirit" is used in a variety of ways in the New Testament. Here are four common examples:
  - a. the living principle by which the physical body is animated James 2:26
  - b. a disposition or attitude II Timothy 1:7; I Peter 3:4
  - c. breath II Thessalonians 2:8
  - d. the essence or nature of God John 4:24

## DISCUSSION:

### I. THE HOLY SPIRIT AND THE GODHEAD

- A. Term defined: The word "Godhead" refers to all that composes God. Example: as the word "mankind" describes all of humanity, the term "Godhead" describes all that composes God.
- B. Term used: Here are the three references in the New Testament containing this word.
  1. Romans 1:20 - The "Godhead" is described as eternal and powerful.
  2. Acts 17:29 - The "Godhead" should not be confused with pagan "gods."
  3. Colossians 2:9 - The "Godhead" dwells fully in Jesus Christ; He is God.
- C. Term applied: The word "Godhead" is applied to three personalities.

1. God - the Father: He is the Almighty, the one to whom we address our prayers. Matthew 6:9
2. God - the Son: Jesus Christ, the Son of God, left His place in heaven and came into this world to be man's savior. John 3:16
3. God - the Holy Spirit: He, like the Father and the Son, has been and is involved in man's redemption from sin. II Peter 1:21; Romans 8:14

D. Term illustrated: There are several passages that illustrate the relationship involved in the Godhead.

1. Genesis 1:26 - The use of the words "us" and "our" indicate the plurality of the Godhead.
2. Matthew 3:16,17 - This passage describes the Father speaking from heaven, the Son in the river and the Holy Spirit descending. These are the three personalities of the Godhead.
3. Matthew 28:18-20 - Baptism is designed to bring one into a new relationship with the Godhead: the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit.
4. II Corinthians 13:14 - In his conclusion to this letter, Paul mentions the Godhead when he describes the grace of Christ, the love of God and the communion of the Holy Spirit.

E. Summary: There is one God. Deuteronomy 6:4; Ephesians 4:5

1. The Godhead is one in purpose and unity.
2. The Godhead is three in personality.

## II. THE NATURE OF THE HOLY SPIRIT

A. The Holy Spirit is not a feeling, an influence, a message, or an irresistible force.

B. The Holy Spirit is a person.

1. Just as Jesus is a person; just as the Father is a person; so the Holy Spirit is a person also.
2. He is a person (an individual) but not a physical being. He is a spirit being just as is the Father (John 4:24).

C. The Holy Spirit has the attributes (characteristics) of an intelligent being.

1. The Holy Spirit loves. Romans 15:30
2. The Holy Spirit knows. I Corinthians 2:11

3. The Holy Spirit guides. John 16:12,13
  4. The Holy Spirit speaks. I Timothy 4:1
  5. The Holy Spirit intercedes. Romans 8:26
  6. The Holy Spirit forbids. Acts 16:7
  7. The Holy Spirit teaches. John 14:26
  8. The Holy Spirit can be blasphemed. Matthew 12:31,32
  9. The Holy Spirit can be despised. Hebrews 10:29
  10. The Holy Spirit can be grieved. Ephesians 4:30
- D. Summary: The Holy Spirit always should be thought of as an intelligent being and not merely a thing or feeling.

### **III. THE WORK OF THE HOLY SPIRIT IN THE OLD TESTAMENT**

- A. The Holy Spirit was at work during the Old Testament period.
1. He was involved in the creation. Genesis 1:2
  2. He was involved in the creation of man. Genesis 1:26
  3. He was involved in striving with wicked men before the flood. Genesis 6:3
  4. He was involved in the preaching of Noah. I Peter 3:18-20; II Peter 2:5
  5. He was involved in the inspiration of the Old Testament writers. I Peter 1:21; Matthew 22:43; Acts 1:16
- B. Summary: The Holy Spirit was involved in the great plan of preparing the world for the coming of Christ.

### **IV. THE HOLY SPIRIT AND JESUS**

- A. The Holy Spirit was involved in the birth of Jesus. Matthew 1:18; Luke 1:35
1. The mother of Jesus (Mary) was a human being; the father of Jesus (the Holy Spirit) was deity. Therefore the result of that union was the birth of a unique person - Jesus Christ.

2. The virgin birth of Jesus Christ would not have been possible without the Holy Spirit.
  3. Jesus is the son of God in a special sense (the only begotten son); no one else sustains this special relationship to the Father. John 3:16
- B. The Holy Spirit was an important part of the ministry of Jesus.
1. The Spirit was upon (with) Jesus. Matthew 12:18; Isaiah 11:2-5
  2. The Spirit anointed Jesus to preach. Luke 4:18
  3. The Spirit gave commands through Jesus. Acts 1:2
- C. The Holy Spirit enabled Jesus to work miracles. Matthew 12:28
- D. Jesus had the Spirit without measure. John 3:34
1. The full power of the Holy Spirit was at the disposal of Jesus.
  2. Others have different measures of the Spirit. (This will be discussed later in the series.)
- E. Jesus was raised from the dead by the power of the Holy Spirit. Romans 8:11
- F. Summary: During His early ministry Jesus not only completed the will of the Father, but He also served in complete harmony with the Holy Spirit.

## V. THE HOLY SPIRIT AND INSPIRATION

- A. Inspiration defined: The inbreathing of God into man enabling him to receive and to communicate divine truth without error.
- B. The Bible is the result of God having spoken to man. Hebrews 1:1,2; Matthew 4:4; II Timothy 3:16,17
- C. The Holy Spirit inspired the writers of the Old Testament. II Peter 1:21
1. Isaiah was inspired. Isaiah 61:1
  2. Ezekiel was inspired. Ezekiel 11:5
  3. Jeremiah was inspired. Jeremiah 31:31-34; Hebrews 10:15
  4. David was inspired. Psalm 110:1; Matthew 22:43
- D. The Holy Spirit inspired the writers of the New Testament. John 16:13

1. The apostles were guided into all truth by the Holy Spirit (known as the Comforter). John 14:26; 16:12-15
2. The mind of God was known by the Spirit who then revealed God's mind (will) in words to inspired men. I Corinthians 2:9-13
3. The New Testament and the Old Testament (all Scripture) are inspired of God. II Timothy 3:16,17

E. Summary: Through the inspiration of the Holy Spirit, the Biblical writers were able to receive and to record God's will in an accurate and complete form.

## VI. THE WORK OF THE HOLY SPIRIT IN CONVERSION

A. Conversion defined: it is the process by which a sinner is transformed into a new creature in Christ.

- Verily (truly)*
1. Jesus made it clear that conversion is absolutely necessary before one can enter God's kingdom. Matthew 18:3
  2. Conversion refers to a turning to God from a life of evil. I Thessalonians 1:9
  3. This conversion is referred to as <sup>except a man be born again</sup> a new birth. John 3:3-5

B. Conversion illustrated: five steps are involved in the process of conversion.

1. The gospel must be preached, heard and understood. Mark 16:15,16
2. The hearer must believe the message of the gospel. Romans 10:17
3. The believer must repent of sin. Acts 17:30
4. The penitent believer must make the good confession. Romans 10:9,10
5. The penitent believer must be immersed in water for the remission of sin. Acts 2:38

C. Conversion directed: the Holy Spirit directs the sinner throughout the entire process of conversion.

1. Conversion is a spiritual birth. John 3:6
2. Conversion involves a renewing of the Holy Spirit. Titus 3:5
3. Conversion includes the sanctification of the Spirit. II Thessalonians 2:13
4. Conversion is completed when one is baptized into one body by the direction of the Spirit. I Corinthians 12:13

D. The issue:

1. Does the Holy Spirit operate upon (contact) the heart of the sinner directly?
2. Or does the Holy Spirit operate on the heart of the sinner through a medium?

E. The Holy Spirit operates in conversion only through the medium of the gospel.

1. It is the power of God unto salvation. Romans 1:16,17
2. It is God's drawing power. John 6:44,45
3. It is the weapon (sword) by which the Spirit works. Ephesians 6:17
4. It is God's calling power. II Thessalonians 2:14
5. It is God's purifying power. I Peter 1:22

F. Summary: The Bible plainly teaches that the Holy Spirit is involved in the conversion of the sinner, and that He exercises that converting power through the gospel.

## VII. THE BAPTISM OF THE HOLY SPIRIT

A. Holy Spirit baptism promised:

1. John promised that Jesus would baptize with the Holy Spirit. Matthew 3:11; Mark 1:8; Luke 3:16
2. Jesus promised to the apostles the baptism of the Holy Spirit. Acts 1:5

B. Holy Spirit baptism defined:

1. The Holy Spirit is a person, therefore, He is not like an element into which one can be immersed.
2. To be baptized with the Holy Spirit means that one is immersed in the power of the Spirit.

C. Holy Spirit baptism fulfilled:

1. On the day of Pentecost the apostles received the baptism of the Spirit which enabled them to accomplish their work. Acts 2
2. The family of Cornelius received the baptism of the Spirit in order to prove that God had accepted Gentiles as well as Jews. Acts 11:16-18

- E. Summary: Holy Spirit baptism was fulfilled at Pentecost when the apostles received this baptism, and at the conversion of Cornelius when God bestowed this baptism on the Gentiles.

## VIII. THE MIRACULOUS GIFTS OF THE HOLY SPIRIT

- A. The fact: while the church was in its infancy (First Century) some Christians were endowed with miraculous spiritual gifts.
1. Jesus promised these gifts. Mark 16:15-20
  2. Paul indicated that these gifts were needed at Rome. Romans 1:11
  3. The church at Corinth had spiritual gifts. I Corinthians 12-14
  4. The Christians in Samaria received these miraculous gifts. Acts 8:17
- B. The purpose: these spiritual gifts had two primary purposes.
1. Spiritual gifts were designed to confirm the word. Mark 16:20
    - a. Before the New Testament was completely recorded, signs/miracles were needed to prove the validity of the message and messenger.
    - b. The message of Christ (the gospel) was confirmed by those with miraculous gifts. Hebrews 2:1-4
  2. Spiritual gifts were designed to edify (strengthen) the church.
    - a. Some were given gifts that would enable them to teach and to thereby edify the church. Ephesians 4:8,12
    - b. These gifts (prophecy, ministry, teaching, exhortation, etc.) were to be used for the strengthening of the one body. Romans 12:5-8
- C. The duration: these spiritual gifts were temporary and limited.
1. The spiritual gifts ceased because they were temporary. I Corinthians 13:8
  2. They ended when the complete (perfect) revelation of the gospel had come. I Corinthians 13:10
  3. This complete revelation is called the unity of the faith. Ephesians 4:13
- D. The termination: these spiritual gifts are no longer available because their purposes have been fulfilled. For one to claim miraculous powers today would imply that the church is still in its infancy, and that the word of God is not confirmed.

## IX. THE HOLY SPIRIT AND THE CHRISTIAN

- A. There are different measures or manifestations of the Holy Spirit. John 3:34
1. Jesus had the Spirit without measure. John 3:34
  2. The apostles had a miraculous endowment of the Spirit.
    - a. the comforter John 16:13
    - b. the baptism of the Spirit Acts 2
    - c. the apostolic signs II Corinthians 12:12
    - d. inspired preaching/writing I Thessalonians 1:5
  3. Spiritual gifts were given to certain ones in the early church. Romans 1:11
    - a. a list of the gifts I Corinthians 12
    - b. duration of the gifts I Corinthians 13
    - c. use of the gifts I Corinthians 14
  4. The Holy Spirit is involved in the life of the church as well as in the lives of individual Christians. I Corinthians 3:16,17; 6:19,20
- B. The gift of the Holy Spirit was promised in Acts 2:38
1. This was not the baptism of the Spirit.
  2. This was not the miraculous gifts of the Spirit.
  3. This was a permanent endowment of the Spirit promised to all who would obey the gospel.
  4. Some consider this to be the Holy Spirit, Himself, dwelling personally in the body of the Christian.
  5. Some consider this to be Holy Spirit dwelling in the Christian through His Word, the gospel.
    - a. God the Father dwells in Christians. Ephesians 4:6
    - b. Christ the Son dwells in Christians. Ephesians 3:17
    - c. The Holy Spirit dwells in Christians. I Corinthians 6:19,20
  6. As long as one understands that the Bible is the final revelation of God to man and that God speaks today only through His Word, then there can be different views on the indwelling of the Spirit. Serious problems can arise when one believes that the Spirit speaks directly to people today apart from the Word of God.
- C. The influence of the Holy Spirit on the Christian is clearly taught in the New Testament.
1. Christians are led by the Spirit. Romans 8:14-16
    - a. Only those led by the Spirit are sons of God.

- b. This leading is through the Word of God.
  - c. Through the gospel the Spirit testifies to us.
2. Christians bear the fruit of the Spirit. Galatians 5:22,23
    - a. A tree is known by its fruit.
    - b. Christians bear spiritual fruit.
    - c. These are qualities approved of by the Spirit.
  3. Christians are filled with the Spirit. Ephesians 5:18,19
    - a. To be “filled with the Spirit” is a command.
    - b. This command is obeyed when one fills his mind with the message of the Spirit (gospel) and follows that message daily.
  4. Christians are assisted in prayer by the Spirit. Romans 8:26
    - a. In time of adversity, Christians often do not know how to pray.
    - b. The Spirit helps during these difficult times.
  5. Christians are directed in worship by the Spirit. I Corinthians 14:15
    - a. In the Corinthians church (having spiritual gifts) the Spirit directed the worship in a direct miraculous manner.
    - b. Today, the Holy Spirit through His Word directs our worship.
  6. Christians are spiritual people. Galatians 6:1
    - a. To be spiritual means that one is living in harmony with the teaching of the Spirit.
    - b. This enables one to be helpful to those who have been overtaken in a fault.
- D. Christians are “sealed” with the Spirit which serves as an earnest for future blessings. II Corinthians 1:22; 5:5; Ephesians 1:12-14
1. The term “sealed” suggests the idea of ownership. We are sealed (owned and protected by God) through the blessings provided by the Spirit.
  2. The term “earnest” suggests the idea of a down payment.
  3. We now enjoy spiritual blessings which are a foretaste of other good things to come.

## **X. THE SINS AGAINST THE HOLY SPIRIT**

- A. The Holy Spirit can be blasphemed. Matthew 12:22-32; Mark 3:22-30; Luke 12:10
1. The term “blaspheme” means to speak against in a harsh and bitter manner.
  2. The example of blaspheming the Holy Spirit occurred when the Pharisees accused Jesus of performing miracles by the power of the devil.

3. Since Jesus performed miracles by the power of the Holy Spirit, this accusation of the Pharisees was an insult to the Spirit.
4. Had this blasphemous charge been accepted by the people in general, then the miracles of Jesus would have been useless and His deity would have been rejected. John 20:30,31
5. This accounts for the severe punishment pronounced upon those guilty of this terrible charge.
6. This was a sin peculiar to the time of the ministry of Christ; it cannot be committed today because Jesus is not here on earth performing miracles.

B. The Holy Spirit can be despised. Hebrews 10:29

1. To despise is to treat with disrespect or contempt.
2. It is possible for one to become so depraved as to treat the Holy Spirit of God in a shameful manner.
3. In this text (Hebrews 10:29) brethren who have become unfaithful and who have gone back into the world are described.
4. This kind of a person is described in II Peter 2:20-22.

C. The Holy Spirit can be lied to. Acts 5:3-5

1. To lie is to tell an untruth or to misrepresent the facts.
2. Because of the sin of covetousness (greed) Ananias and Sapphira lied to Peter, to the church, and most importantly to the Holy Spirit.
3. Since God knows the heart of each person, it is very foolish indeed for one to attempt to deceive Him.

D. The Holy Spirit can be resisted. Acts 7:51

1. To resist means that one is opposing the influence or the appeal of another.
2. The people to whom Stephen spoke rejected the message of the gospel (which is the sword of the Spirit), therefore they were guilty of resisting the Spirit.
3. Since the Spirit appeals to the lost through the gospel, when one resists the gospel, he is actually resisting the Spirit. Romans 1:16,17
4. This principle is illustrated by Israel when they asked for a king. God said to Samuel: "They have not rejected you; they have rejected Me." I Samuel 8:7

E. The Holy Spirit's temple can be defiled.

1. To defile means to contaminate with something evil or filthy.
2. The temple of the Spirit refers to:
  - a. the church: it is defiled when evil people cause trouble and division. They will be destroyed because of this conduct. I Corinthians 3:16,17
  - b. the Christian: he/she is defiled when evil conduct (such as fornication) is practiced. I Corinthians 6:19,20
3. Since the Spirit is the "Holy" Spirit, He wants His people, both the church as a whole as well as each individual, to be holy and undefiled.

F. The Holy Spirit can be quenched. I Thessalonians 5:19

1. To quench means to extinguish or to suppress or to inhibit.
2. The Holy Spirit through His word will motivate and stimulate Christians to action. For this reason, we should be filled with the Spirit which will cause us to serve Christ with enthusiasm. Ephesians 5:18,19
3. Those who allow indifference, unconcern and lukewarmness to stifle their zeal are people who have quenched the Spirit. Revelation 3:14-22

G. The Holy Spirit can be grieved. Ephesians 4:30

1. When one is grieved he is caused to experience sorrow and disappointment.
2. Since the Holy Spirit has the attributes of a person (love, joy, etc.), it is possible for Him to experience grief.
3. The Spirit wants each Christian to be successful in living the Christian life.
4. When one fails to grow, love, serve, study and resist temptation, then the Holy Spirit is grieved at this failure.

**CONCLUSION:**

1. There are two extremes views of the Holy Spirit:
  - a. One view considers the Holy Spirit to be a strange power that overcomes a person in emotionalism.
  - b. The other is the view that the Holy Spirit has nothing to do with our spiritual welfare.

2. The Bible teaches that the Holy Spirit has been directly involved in the great plan for the salvation of the world.
3. Today we benefit from the Bible, the book inspired by the Holy Spirit, and use it as our guide.
4. We enjoy membership in the spiritual house (the church) in which we offer spiritual sacrifices that God accepts. 1 Peter 2:5
5. Because of the work of the Godhead (the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit) we can enjoy the certain hope of eternal life when our earthly service to God is ended in death.



