

WHAT GOOD IS GOOD DOCTRINE?

What Good is the Doctrine of The Holy Spirit?

Of each of the three persons of the Trinity, the Holy Spirit is probably the least understood. Of the many false doctrines being taught today under the name of Christianity, a large portion of them are doctrines related to the Holy Spirit.

I. THE PERSON OF THE HOLY SPIRIT

A. The Holy Spirit is personal. He is not something; He is someone.

1. The Holy Spirit is not an it; the Holy Spirit is “He.”
2. The Holy Spirit is not a force or power; He is the third person of the Trinity.
3. Read John 16:7-15 as Jesus calls the Holy Spirit the Helper and refers to the Holy Spirit thirteen times as He, Him, or His.

John 16:7-15 NKJV 7 Nevertheless I tell you the truth. It is to your advantage that I go away; for if I do not go away, the Helper will not come to you; but if I depart, I will send **Him** to you. 8 And when **He** has come, **He** will convict the world of sin, and of righteousness, and of judgment: 9 of sin, because they do not believe in Me; 10 of righteousness, because I go to My Father and you see Me no more; 11 of judgment, because the ruler of this world is judged.

12 “I still have many things to say to you, but you cannot bear *them* now. 13 However, when **He**, the Spirit of truth, has come, **He** will guide you into all truth; for **He** will not speak on **His** own *authority*, but whatever **He** hears **He** will speak; and **He** will tell you things to come.

14 **He** will glorify Me, for **He** will take of what is Mine and declare *it* to you. 15 All things that the Father has are Mine. Therefore I said that **He** will take of Mine and declare *it* to you.

4. The actions of the Spirit are personal actions: He can search, speak, cry, pray, testify, teach, lead, and command.
5. The Holy Spirit is given personal names. In the New Testament alone He is given 39 different designations including
 - a. the Spirit of God, the Spirit of Christ, the Spirit of Jesus,
 - b. the Eternal Spirit, the Promise of the Father, the Spirit of truth,
 - c. the Spirit of holiness, the Spirit of grace, the Spirit of glory,

d. the Comforter, and over 100 times, the Holy Spirit.

B. The Holy Spirit is God, equal with the Father and the Son. Acts 5:3-4 NKJV
 3 But Peter said, "Ananias, why has Satan filled your heart to **lie to the Holy Spirit** and keep back *part* of the price of the land for yourself? ... You have not **lied to men but to God.**"

II. THE HOLY SPIRIT IN THE PAST

A. Like the Father and the Son, the Holy Spirit is preexistent. Genesis 1:1-2 NKJV
 1 In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth. 2 The earth was without form, and void; and darkness was on the face of the deep. And the Spirit of God was hovering over the face of the waters.

B. The Holy Spirit worked in Old Testament times.

1. He energized the early creation. (Genesis 1:2)
2. He was a part of the creation of man. Genesis 1:26 NKJV Then God said, "Let **Us** make man in **Our** image, according to Our likeness;
3. He came upon certain individuals and empowered them for particular tasks.
 - a. The Holy Spirit gave Joseph administrative ability. (Genesis 41:38)
 - b. The Holy Spirit gave Moses and the elders - leadership ability. (Numbers 11:17-39)
 - c. He gave Gideon courage. (Judges 6:34)
 - d. The Holy Spirit gave David a heart for God. (1 Samuel 16:13)
 - f. He gave Daniel wisdom and discernment. (Daniel 4:8-9)
 - g. The Holy Spirit gave The Prophets understanding. 1 Peter 1:10-11 NKJV
 10 Of this salvation the prophets have inquired and searched carefully, who prophesied of the grace *that would come* to you, 11 searching what, or what manner of time, the Spirit of Christ who was in them was indicating when He testified beforehand the sufferings of Christ and the glories that would follow.

So, the common understanding that the Holy Spirit did not begin to work until Pentecost is very much in error. However, during NT times, His work is greatly enlarged.

C. The enlarged work of the Holy Spirit during the period of the New Testament

1. The Holy Spirit came upon Christ for the very first time in all of the Spirit's fullness. Isaiah 11:1-2 NKJV
 1 There shall come forth a Rod from

the stem of Jesse, And a Branch shall grow out of his roots. 2 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 of the fear of the LORD.

The Holy Spirit had come upon others before, but He had never come upon someone in all of the fullness of the Spirit. This was reserved for Christ in the incarnation.

2. **In the Old Testament era, the Holy Spirit had given to various individuals wisdom, leadership, prophetic foresight, physical strength, moral courage, and spiritual insight; but never before had all these virtues been found in one person.**
3. **The working of the Holy Spirit in the life of Jesus was everywhere evident.**
 - a. **Jesus was conceived of the Holy Spirit.**
 - b. **Jesus was vindicated by the Holy Spirit.**
 - c. **Jesus was anointed by the Holy Spirit.**
 - d. **Jesus was gladdened by the Holy Spirit.**
 - e. **Jesus gave commands from the Holy Spirit.**
4. **At Pentecost, the work the Holy Spirit did in the life of Christ became available to all who trusted in Jesus.**
 - a. **The Holy Spirit came upon every believer.**
 - b. **The Holy Spirit came in all His fullness.**
 - c. **The Holy Spirit gave birth to the church.**
 - 1) **He baptized those who were saved into the church.**
 - 2) **He fashioned the individual believers into God's temple.**
 - 3) **He bestowed gifts on each believer to edify the church.**
 - 4) **He supplied the church's needs.**
 - 5) **He magnified Christ as the Head of the church.**

III. THE HOLY SPIRIT TODAY – But it is important not to start here. What the Spirit does today has foundations in what He did in OT and NT times.

- A. The Holy Spirit always points men to Christ.** John 15:26 NKJV “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 16:14 NKJV **He will glorify Me**, for He will take of what is Mine and declare *it* to you.

The best way to tell whether or not a particular work or occurrence is of the Holy Spirit is to see who is glorified by it. If the event draws attention to the Spirit Himself, then it is not of the Spirit. The Holy Spirit always draws attention to Christ, **never to Himself.**

- B. The Holy Spirit works in the lives of the lost.** John 16:8 NKJV **And when He has come, He will convict the world of sin, and of righteousness, and of judgment:**

1. **Convicts men of sin**
2. **Convinces them that Christ is the only way to righteousness**
3. **Warns them of a judgment to come**

Everything that happens that draws a person to Christ is the work of the Holy Spirit.

- C. The Holy Spirit works in the lives of believers.** 1 Corinthians 6:19 NKJV **Or do you not know that your body is the temple of the Holy Spirit who is in you, whom you have from God, and you are not your own?**

While a person is still lost in his sins, the Holy Spirit works in and around the life of that individual to draw them to Christ. Once a person receives the witness of the Spirit and responds in faith to Christ, the Holy Spirit moves into the new believer's life and immediately begins a great work.

1. **When a person is saved, the Holy Spirit does several things immediately.**
 - a. **The Holy Spirit indwells the believer, and He takes up permanent residence.** Acts 2:38 NKJV **Then Peter said to them, “Repent, and let every one of you be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins; and you shall receive the gift of the Holy Spirit. The Holy Spirit is Himself the gift.**
 - b. **The Holy Spirit immerses the believer into the church, the body of Christ.** 1 Corinthians 12:13 NKJV **For by one Spirit we were all baptized into one body...** The baptism of the Spirit is not a “second blessing” or second step of greater spirituality.
 - c. **The Holy Spirit gives every believer at least one spiritual gift to edify (build up) the whole body, not for the edification of the believer.** Gifts are not given to benefit the individual. They are given to benefit the body,

the church. When a person uses their spiritual gift for personal benefit, they are misusing the gift.

2. **The Holy Spirit continues His work throughout the life of the believer.**

a. **The Holy Spirit continues to indwell the believer.**

b. **The Holy Spirit fills the believer. Ephesians 5:18 NKJV And do not be drunk with wine, in which is dissipation; but be filled with the Spirit,**

- **To be filled with the Spirit means to be empowered and controlled by the Spirit.** Being filled with the Spirit is not the same as being indwelt by the Spirit. Every believer is indwelt by the Spirit of God and is initially filled when they are saved. But as soon as the believer takes back control of their life, then the believer is no longer controlled or filled by the Spirit. Since the Holy Spirit would never lead a believer to sin, sin is the sure evidence that the believer is not filled with the Spirit.
- **Filling is not automatic.** Eph. 5:18 is a command. Being filled with the Spirit is something the Word of God tells us to do, which instructs us that the filling does not take place automatically. It is something that each believer must choose to do.
- **Sin blocks filling.** Repentance often accompanies the filling of the Spirit because if sin is ongoing in the life of the believer, he cannot be filled with the Spirit in that condition. One cannot be walking in sin and controlled by the Holy Spirit at the same time. Therefore, if we have had sin in our life, but we desire to yield anew to the control of the Spirit, then we must repent and confess our sin and then ask the Spirit to fill us.
- **We are commanded to be continually filled with the Spirit.** Eph. 5:18 uses the verb “be filled” in the present active conjugation. This tense of the verb implies continuing action. In other words, we are not just filled once and therefore forever filled. We must continually seek the Holy Spirit’s control and empowering in our lives. We may have been fully surrendered to the control of the Spirit of God yesterday, but not fully surrendered to His control today.

Folks, do you know what I pray for more often than any other thing? I pray this more often than “Lord bless me” or “Lord bless my family” or “Lord bless my church.” I pray, “Lord fill me with the Holy Spirit. Lord, let me be controlled by the Spirit of God in all I do today, and once controlled, empowered by the Spirit.”

I pray this so very often because I know how easily my own thoughts get substituted in my mind for God’s thoughts and how often I assume that my own ways are His ways. I am keenly aware that my flesh wars against the spirit, and I need the power of the Holy Spirit to subdue my flesh and let the spirit win. I know that apart from Christ, I can do nothing good or of eternal value, and the only way to abide in Christ is for the Holy Spirit who lives inside of me to be in control of me.

Being Spirit-filled brings God's blessings on me personally, on my family, and on you, my beloved church family. But to do it, I must do it continually, even more often than just once a day.

I also pray to be filled, controlled by the Spirit because I know ...

D. We can cause the Holy Spirit to suffer. Did you know that the Holy Spirit is God, but we can inflict pain upon Him?

- 1. An unbeliever can commit blasphemy of the Holy Spirit.** *Matthew 12:31 NKJV* "Therefore I say to you, every sin and blasphemy will be forgiven men, but the **blasphemy against the Spirit** will not be forgiven men.

The Spirit gives witness that Christ is the Savior. When someone refuses the final witness of the Spirit concerning Christ, he has called the Spirit a liar and blasphemed Him. He has in so doing forever rejected the Savior and is therefore eternally lost. **A believer cannot commit blasphemy of the Holy Spirit, but he can cause the Spirit to suffer in other ways.**

- 2. Either a believer or an unbeliever can spurn the Holy Spirit.** *Hebrews 3:7-8 NKJV* 7 Therefore, as the Holy Spirit says: "*Today, if you will hear His voice, 8 **Do not harden your hearts** as in the rebellion, In the day of trial in the wilderness,*

Any time the Holy Spirit urges an action upon a person and is met with refusal, the Holy Spirit has been spurned.

- 3. Grieving of the Spirit is caused by sin in the life of the believer.** *Ephesians 4:30-32 NKJV* 30 And **do not grieve the Holy Spirit of God**, by whom you were sealed for the day of redemption. 31 Let all bitterness, wrath, anger, clamor, and evil speaking be put away from you, with all malice. 32 And be kind to one another, tenderhearted, forgiving one another, even as **God in Christ forgave you.** While any sin in our lives grieves the Spirit of God, notice that the sins listed in this passage as causing grief to the Spirit are the sins of the heart that pertain to ill will and unforgiveness, especially toward fellow believers.

- 4. Quenching the Spirit means putting the fire out where the Spirit is working.** *1 Thessalonians 5:19 NKJV* **Do not quench the Spirit.** We do this by

- **continual criticism**
- **complaining**
- **being uncooperative**
- **complacency**

CONCLUSION: What is the Holy Spirit of the Living God doing in your life today?

- As a believer, you are indwelt by the Spirit. He forever lives in you!
- But are you filled with, controlled by, the Holy Spirit?
- Are you using the spiritual gifts He has given you for the benefit of the Body of Christ or do you use them to edify yourself?
- Are you grieving the Spirit by maintaining malice or unforgiveness in your heart toward another person, especially toward a fellow believer who has offended you or sinned against you?
- Are you grieving the Spirit by being constantly critical and complaining often?

Let us pray by

- confessing any sin in our lives,
- declaring forgiveness to all who have sinned against us,
- and yielding our lives to the control of the Holy Spirit of the Living God.