

In the Holy Spirit - John 16:1-15
Notes, Family Worship, Bible Reading

Notes from the Sermon

A recent study showed that 53% of Bible-believing Christians see The Holy Spirit as a force, not a person. But what does scripture say about this? Is The Holy Spirit just a force, or a person? Is The Holy Spirit God, or a created being? Scripture says you can be filled with The Holy Spirit, but- how does that work? That makes The Holy Spirit sound like a gas or a liquid, not a person.

As we've discussed, in the development of the original version of the Nicene Creed leading up to 325, the main conversation was about the person of The Son, refuting heresies from people like Arius, who said Jesus was a created being, that He was not co-eternal with the Father, that He was not of the same substance as The Father (Homoousios). There was so much focus being given to that subject & ironing out a theological statement of belief on who The Son was that when they got to The Holy Spirit, the initial version of the creed from 325 closed with the very simple statement: "And we believe in The Holy Spirit" - very similar to The Apostle's Creed. But in the years following, the same kind of questions began to arise regarding The Holy Spirit: Is The Holy Spirit a person? Is The Holy Spirit God? Is The Holy Spirit of the same substance as The Father and The Son, is He also considered homoousios? And in order to combat further heresies and controversies that had begun creeping in, the statement about our belief in The Holy Spirit was fleshed out in more detail to the article that we have in the version of the Nicene Creed from the year 381.

The Trinity is one of the most mysteriously confusing concepts in all of scripture. How can God be one, but three distinct persons? John chapter 16 gives us the words of Jesus on His last night with the disciples, where He shares what is known as the Upper Room Discourse (John 14-17). In this section, Jesus shares some of the most concentrated teaching on the person and work of The Holy Spirit in all of scripture. Here, Jesus states several points that we see reflected in the third article of The Nicene Creed, the section on The Holy Spirit.

First of all, The Holy Spirit is a person. Jesus Himself continually uses personal pronouns ("he", "him", "who", "whom") to refer to The Holy Spirit. Second, there are a number of verbs associated with The Holy Spirit in scripture - in this passage alone, we see The Holy Spirit convicts, guides, speaks, declares, and glorifies The Son. Elsewhere in scripture, we see concepts like how rebelling against God leads to grieving The Holy Spirit. These things cannot possibly be done to / by an impersonal force.

Second, The Holy Spirit is God. In verse 13, Jesus points out that The Holy Spirit will declare to you the things that are to come, which points to His omniscience. He sees the future, which is something only God can do. Additionally, Jesus continually refers to The Holy Spirit as The Helper. In fact, earlier in this discourse, He uses the phrase "another Helper". The word used here is *parakletos*, which means one who is called to come alongside with strength for the battle ahead. A legal advocate, who knows you and is always with you would be a good description. But the Greek word for "another" here (*allos*) means another Helper of the same kind, referring to a second paraclete - the first being Jesus. So, Jesus is conveying that The Holy Spirit is of the same essence as Himself - confirming the deity of The Holy Spirit.

From here, if we begin to take a look at what The Holy Spirit does, we can quickly become overwhelmed: His work is pointed to throughout all of scripture. But just from this passage, we can still see quite a bit. There are several ways in which The Holy Spirit illumines, or reveals. He will guide the disciples into the truth, pointing to how The Holy Spirit will inspire their work in the writing of the New Testament scriptures. He spoke through the prophets to create the Old Testament, and the same will happen for the New Testament,

showing how He testifies or bears witness to Jesus, glorifying The Son for His saving work on the cross.

The Holy Spirit also convicts the world of sin, pointing to the righteousness of Christ and how the ruler of the world (Satan) has been judged. One thing this points to is the concept of regeneration, or how The Holy Spirit grants spiritual life to each Christian, raising them from the dead so that they are now able to repent and trust in Christ as a new creation.

This is a way The Holy Spirit bears witness, within the heart of sinners, to the beauty of the gospel, the saving work of Jesus Christ, who lived the perfect life you & I could not, died the death that we deserve, was buried, and rose from the grave, defeating eternal death on our behalf. Jesus paid the price our sin deserves, and God pours His love into our hearts through The Holy Spirit (Romans 5:5). This is how The Holy Spirit loves, by being the best friend you could possibly fathom: one who points out your faults, your sins, but reminds you that you are loved far more than you can imagine. One who points you to the finished work of the cross as the prime example of God's love for you. One who drives you into the wilderness of this broken world for the purpose of His glory, but is strengthening you every step of the way. Dependence upon The Holy Spirit is key in the life of the believer. Praise God for the person and work of The Holy Spirit.

Bible Reading for the Week

Daily Bible Readings

Sun	Mon	Tues	Weds	Thurs	Fri	Sat
Psalm 16	Psalm 17	Psalm 18	Psalm 19	Psalm 20	Psalm 21	Psalm 22

Reading from this past week's sermon: John 16:1-15

Reading in preparation for this coming Sunday: Ephesians 2:13-22

Family Worship

Song - *Before the Throne of God Above*

<https://youtu.be/kXHXFhJA4SY?si=T5Fdlls--QRDjgc4>

Gospel Project

Unit: The Southern Kingdom

Story: Prophets to Judah

Big Picture Question: What is God like?

Answer: God is holy, good, and loving.

Scripture: Micah 1

New City Catechism

Question 46: What is the Lord's Supper?

Answer: Christ commanded all Christians to eat bread and to drink from the cup in thankful remembrance of him

Verse: 1 Corinthians 11:23-26

John 16:1-15

- Have you ever thought about whether The Holy Spirit is a force or a person, God or created being? Can you see His personhood and deity exemplified in this passage?
- How do you see the Holy Spirit at work in your life? Has your heart been regenerated by The Holy Spirit such that you believe & trust in the person & work of The Son?
- How can you depend more on The Holy Spirit as you seek to follow and worship Jesus?

Prayer

*Ask God to fill you with His Holy Spirit and with power for your life and mission.

*Pray for those who were baptized in our church this week, and that others would believe and be baptized.