

The Holy Spirit
The Personality and Divinity of the Holy Spirit

Lesson #1 for April 1, 2006

Scriptures: Genesis 1:26; 3:22; Isaiah 6:8; Matthew 28:19; 1 Cor. 12:4-11,28; 2 Cor. 13:13.

1. What do we know for sure about the Holy Spirit? What would you like to know about the Holy Spirit? In your opinion is He an equal Partner in divinity with the Father and the Son?
2. In what ways are we “made like God”? (Genesis 1:26).
3. Does the Holy Spirit seem like a servant to the other members of Godhead? Does He take leadership in any role?
4. Look at Seventh-day Adventist fundamental belief number 5: “God the eternal Spirit was active with the Father and the Son in Creation, incarnation, and redemption. He inspired the writers of Scripture. He filled Christ’s life with power. He draws and convicts human beings; and those who respond He renews and transforms into the image of God. Sent by the Father and the Son to be always with His children, He extends spiritual gifts to the church, empowers it to bear witness to Christ, and in harmony with the Scriptures leads it into all truth.” *Seventh-day Adventists Believe...* (2nd ed.) (Nampa, Idaho: Pacific Press Publishing Association, 2005), page 69.
5. What role does the Spirit play in your Christianity? “Christ’s accomplishments for us become efficacious only through the ministry of the Holy Spirit.” (*Teacher’s Study Guide* p. 2) Does this mean that we are incapable of relating to Jesus Christ without the intervention of the Holy Spirit? In what sense does this limit Christ’s work?
6. By one count there are 300 references to the Holy Spirit in Scripture. 200 of these are in the New Testament and 100 in the Old Testament. In light of all these references do you feel that you are fully informed about the Spirit’s nature and personality?
7. When the Holy Spirit is mentioned, what comes to your mind? What are the most important things that the Holy Spirit does for us as Christians?
8. “We believe not only in Christ’s death for our sins but also in His intercession for us in the heavenly sanctuary. **Only the Spirit can apply the results of that intercession to our lives in anticipation of Christ’s return.**” (*Adult Teachers Sabbath School Bible Study Guide*, page 3) What is it that the Spirit can do that the Son and Father cannot do? Or is it that this is just His role?
9. What role did the Holy Spirit play in giving us Scripture? Only the Spirit “can breathe upon us the life-changing breath of our Lord—a truth so fundamental to being a Christian.” What is the “life-changing breath of our Lord”?
10. As our lesson points out the Holy Spirit fills the scriptures from Genesis 1:2 to Revelation 22:17. Is this because He was responsible for the writing of the Scriptures?
11. In our first lesson of this series we are focusing on the divinity of the Holy Spirit. Do you have any questions about His divinity?
12. If someone happens to ask you to explain our triune—3-in-1—God, what words do you like to use?
13. There are many passages in Scripture where God is referred to in the plural number. Are these always intended to mean Father, Son and Holy Spirit?

14. "I am instructed to say, The sentiments of those who are searching for advanced scientific ideas are not to be trusted. Such representations as the following are made: "The Father is as the light invisible: the Son is as the light embodied; the Spirit is the light shed abroad." "The Father is like the dew, invisible vapor; the Son is like the dew gathered in beautiful form; the Spirit is like the dew fallen to the seat of life." Another representation: "The Father is like the invisible vapor; the Son is like the leaden cloud; the Spirit is rain fallen and working in refreshing power." {Ev 614.1}

All these spiritualistic representations are simply nothingness. They are imperfect, untrue. They weaken and diminish the Majesty which no earthly likeness can be compared to. God cannot be compared with the things His hands have made. These are mere earthly things, suffering under the curse of God because of the sins of man. The Father cannot be described by the things of earth. The Father is all the fullness of the Godhead bodily, and is invisible to mortal sight. {Ev 614.2}

The Son is all the fullness of the Godhead manifested. The Word of God declares Him to be "the express image of His person." "God so loved the world, that He gave His only-begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish, but have [615] everlasting life." Here is shown the personality of the Father. {Ev 614.3}

The Comforter that Christ promised to send after He ascended to heaven, is the Spirit in all the fullness of the Godhead, making manifest the power of divine grace to all who receive and believe in Christ as a personal Saviour. There are three living persons of the heavenly trio; in the name of these three great powers—the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit—those who receive Christ by living faith are baptized, and these powers will co-operate with the obedient subjects of heaven in their efforts to live the new life in Christ.— *Special Testimonies, Series B, No. 7, pp. 62, 63. (1905)* {Ev 615.1}

15. "The Holy Spirit, eternal, omniscient, omnipotent, and omnipresent, is a coequal member of the triune Godhead. He possesses personality, has an infinite capacity to communicate, and operates in total unity with the Father and the Son." (Teacher's Intro p. 7,8) Do you agree with this statement? Do you have any questions about it?
16. There have been a lot of arguments down through the years about the divinity of Christ. Have there been any arguments about the Holy Spirit?
17. Look at the passages which are used to describe the plurality of the Godhead: Genesis 1:26; 3:22; 11:7; Isaiah 6:8; John 1:1-3; 8:58. None of these passages are speaking specifically about divinity or about the role of the Holy Spirit. Is it fair to use them in this way?
18. Many people and many church groups think of the Holy Spirit as some kind of force or power. Is it very important to recognize that the Holy Spirit is a person?
19. Look at some of the things that the Holy Spirit is described as doing in Scripture: the Spirit of God moved over the face of the waters. (Genesis 1:2) the Holy Spirit caused Mary to conceive Jesus. (Matthew 1:20). We are baptized in the name of Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. (Matthew 28:19). Jesus promises when He leaves to send another Helper just like Himself. (John 14:16). Peter said that Ananias and Sapphira lied directly to the Holy Spirit. This led to their death. Paul says (Romans 8:11) that the Holy Spirit raised Jesus to life and will raise you also. The Spirit searches and knows the deep things of God and knows everything about God. (1 Corinthians 2:10,11). The Spirit appears to be able to open to us an understanding of God and of Scriptures and thus transform our lives (2 Corinthians 3:17,18). The Holy Spirit is associated with truth (John 16:13), life (Romans 8:2), and

omnipotence (1 Corinthians 2:10,11).

20. Why do you think Jesus says that blasphemy spoken against the Holy Spirit cannot be forgiven? (Matthew 12:31,32).
21. John repeatedly refers to the Holy Spirit using pronouns such as He, who, and whom in John 14-16. This in spite of the fact that the word for Spirit in Greek is neuter. Is this type of secondary evidence convincing in your mind? Why or why not?
22. "Christ's frequent reference to the Holy Spirit as "he," "who," and "whom" in John chapters 14-16, plainly attests to the personal identity of the Holy Spirit, and precludes the notion that the Spirit is a mere effluence or exalted outshining, from the Godhead. Jesus declared that the Spirit would *dwell* in the believer (John 14:16, 17), would *guide* seekers into all truth (16:13), would *teach* all things (14:26), would *serve* as the Comforter (14:26, KJV), would *speak* and *remind* believers of Christ's words (14:26), would *testify* of Christ (15:26), would *convince* and *convict* human minds (16:7,8), and would *show* things to come in conjunction with an expanding revelation of Christ (16:13-15). These are not the attributes and actions of an impersonal force, but of an intelligent, volitional Being." (*Adult Teachers Sabbath School Bible Study Guide*, page 9)
23. One important thing that we need to recognize in this series of lessons is that the Holy Spirit is not a power or force that we can use but rather a divine being that would like to work with and use us. Are we ready to be used by Him? What would that mean and what would the consequences be?
24. Peter in Acts 5:3,4 equates the "Holy Ghost" with "God". This again is an incidental cross reference. What weight should such statements have?
25. What is the role of the Holy Spirit in giving spiritual gifts? (1 Corinthians 12:4-11,28).
26. "How do we know the Holy Spirit is a divine, personal Being, as are the Father and the Son? Why is it important to believe this?" (*Adult Teachers Sabbath School Bible Study Guide*, page 11)
27. "Our views on the Holy Spirit stem from the concept of the Trinity as a unity of Three coeternal Beings. Most Christian denominations believe that this is true. What evidence for this belief do we have in the Bible?" (*ibid* p. 11)
28. "Why do some people, both Christians and non-Christians, find the Trinity concept difficult to understand and believe in? Do you find it difficult? If so, why? How do you resolve your difficulties, and how would you explain the Trinity concept to others who may not believe or accept it?" (*ibid* p. 11)
29. "Why is the idea of the Holy Spirit as an impersonal force attractive to some people? What evidence does the Bible give us that this view is incorrect? How might our own way of speaking about the Holy Spirit contribute to the confusion?" (*ibid* p. 11)
30. What evidence is found in the Old Testament of the plural nature of God? How does the Old Testament stress that there is only one God? Why do these two concepts not contradict each other?" (*ibid* page 11)
31. There are a few passages in Scripture where the name's Father, Son and Holy Spirit are associated. (2 Corinthians 13:14; Matthew 28:19). Why doesn't our lesson study guide mentioned 1 John 5:7,8?
32. There are other evidences in Scripture that the Holy Spirit is a person. He has **a distinct**

personality, one that has **intelligence** (John 14:26; 15:26; Romans 8:16) **a will** (Acts 16:7; 1 Corinthians 12:11), and **affections** (Ephesians 4:30). He sends people on missions (Acts 10:19,20), speaks expressly (1 Timothy 4:1), prevents people from going places (Acts 16:7), and commands people (Acts 11:12), forbids actions (Acts 16:6), calls ministers to the Gospel (Acts 13:2), and appoints them their spheres of duty (Acts 20:28), and makes intercession (Romans 8:26,27).

33. The usual pattern in Scripture seems to be that the Father and His Son work together. Often the Father gives the Son a task to do which the Son in turn hands to the Holy Spirit. What do these different roles imply?
34. Is it important to distinguish between the Holy Spirit and the Holy Ghost? Which is a more correct name for this third person of the Godhead? Where did these different names come from?
35. “We need to realize that the Holy Spirit, who is as much a person as God is a person, is walking through these grounds.--Manuscript 66, (Talk, April 15, 1899) (From a talk to the students at the Avondale School.) {Ev 616.5}
- “The Holy Spirit is a person, for He beareth witness with our spirits that we are the children of God. When this witness is borne, it carries with it its own evidence. At such times we believe and are sure that we are the children of God. . . . {Ev 616.6}
- “The Holy Spirit has a personality, else He could not bear witness to our spirits and with our spirits that we are the children of God. He must also be a divine person, else He could not search out the secrets which lie hidden in the mind 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.”--Manuscript 20, 1906. {Ev 617.1}
- “The prince of the power of evil can only be held in check by the power of God in the third person of the Godhead, the Holy Spirit.”--Special Testimonies, Series A, No. 10, p. 37. (1897) {Ev 617.2}
- “We are to co-operate with the three highest powers in heaven,—the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost, —and these powers will work through us, making us workers together with God.”--Special Testimonies, Series B, No. 7, p. 51. (1905) {Ev 617.3}
36. What role has the Holy Spirit played in your life?

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