

Is the Holy Spirit an Individual, the Third Person of the Godhead or Is He Simply the Influence of Jesus Christ or God the Father?

“Christ determined to bestow a gift on those who had been with Him and on those who should believe on Him, because this was the occasion of His ascension and inauguration, a jubilee in heaven. What gift could Christ bestow rich enough to signalize and grace His ascension to the mediatorial throne? It must be worthy of His greatness and His royalty. **Christ gave His representative, the third person of the Godhead, the Holy Spirit. This Gift could not be excelled.** . . . “{Christ Triumphant 301}

“In describing to His disciples the office work of the Holy Spirit, Jesus sought to inspire them with the joy and hope that inspired His own heart. He rejoiced because of the abundant help He had provided for His church. The Holy Spirit was the highest of all gifts that He could solicit from His Father for the exaltation of His people. The Spirit was to be given as a regenerating agent, and without this the sacrifice of Christ would have been of no avail. The power of evil had been strengthening for centuries, and the submission of men to this satanic captivity was amazing. Sin could be resisted and overcome only through the mighty agency of **the Third Person of the Godhead**, who would come with no modified energy, but in the fullness of divine power. It is the Spirit that makes effectual what has been wrought out by the world's Redeemer. It is by the Spirit that the heart is made pure. Through the Spirit the believer becomes a partaker of the divine nature. Christ has given His Spirit as a divine power to overcome all hereditary and cultivated tendencies to evil, and to impress His own character upon His church.

Of the Spirit Jesus said, "He shall glorify Me." The Saviour came to glorify the Father by the demonstration of His love; so the Spirit was to glorify Christ by revealing His grace to the world. The very image of God is to be reproduced in humanity. The honor of God, the honor of Christ, is involved in the perfection of the character of His people.

"When He [the Spirit of truth] is come, He will reprove the world of sin, and of righteousness, and of judgment." The preaching of the word will be of no avail without the continual presence and aid of the Holy Spirit. This is the only effectual teacher of divine truth. Only when the truth is accompanied to the heart by the Spirit will it quicken the conscience or transform the life. One might be able to present the letter of the word of God, he might be familiar with all its commands and promises; but unless the Holy Spirit sets home the truth, no souls will fall on the Rock and be broken. No amount of education, no advantages, however great, can make one a channel of light without the co-operation of the Spirit of God. The sowing of the gospel seed will not be a success unless the seed is quickened into life by the dew of heaven. Before one book of the New Testament was written, before one gospel sermon had been preached after Christ's ascension, the Holy Spirit came upon the praying apostles. Then the testimony of their enemies was, "Ye have filled Jerusalem with your doctrine." Acts 5:28." {The Desire of Ages 671, 672}

“Jesus could give alone security to God; for He was equal with God. He alone could be a mediator between God and man; for He possessed divinity and humanity. Jesus could thus give security to both parties for the fulfillment of the prescribed conditions. As the Son of God He gives security to God in our behalf, and as the eternal Word, as one equal with the Father, He assures us of the Father's love to usward who believe His pledged word. When God would assure us of His immutable counsel of peace, He gives His only begotten Son to become one of the human family, **forever to retain His human nature** as a pledge that God will fulfill His word.” --The Review and Herald, April 3, 1894.” {S.D.A. Bible Commentary Vol. 7A}

“**Cumbered with humanity, Christ could not be in every place personally**; therefore it was altogether for their advantage that He should leave them, go to His father, and send the Holy Spirit to be His successor on earth. The Holy Spirit is Himself divested of the personality of humanity and independent thereof. He would represent Himself as present in all places by His Holy Spirit, as the Omnipresent. "But the Comforter,

which is the Holy Ghost, whom the Father will send in My name, He shall (although unseen by you), [THIS PHRASE WAS ADDED BY ELLEN WHITE.] teach you all things, and bring all things to your remembrance, whatsoever I have said unto you" [John 14:26]. "Nevertheless I tell you the truth; It is expedient for you that I go away: for if I go not away, the Comforter will come not unto you; but if I depart, I will send Him unto you" [John 16:7]." {14 Manuscript Release 23}

“The Holy Spirit is Christ's representative, but divested of the personality of humanity, and independent thereof. Cumbered with humanity, Christ could not be in every place personally. Therefore it was for their interest that He should go to the Father, and send the Spirit to be His successor on earth. No one could then have any advantage because of his location or his personal contact with Christ. By the Spirit the Saviour would be accessible to all. In this sense He would be nearer to them than if He had not ascended on high.” {The Desire of Ages 669}

“The Power of God in the Third Person.--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)” {Evangelism 617}

“Evil had been accumulating for centuries and could only be restrained and resisted by the mighty power of **the Holy Spirit, the Third Person of the Godhead**, who would come with no modified energy, but in the fullness of divine power. Another spirit must be met; for the essence of evil was working in all ways, and the submission of man to this satanic captivity was amazing.” {Testimonies to Ministers 392}

“We need to realize that the Holy Spirit . . . is as much a person as God is a person. . . .

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.

The Holy Spirit is a free, working, independent agency. The God of heaven uses His Spirit as it pleases Him; and human minds, human judgment, and human methods can no more set boundaries to its working, or prescribe the channel through which it shall operate, than they can say to the wind, "I bid you to blow in a certain direction, and to conduct yourself in such and such a manner."

From the beginning God has been working by His Holy Spirit through human instrumentalities for the accomplishment of His purpose in behalf of the fallen race. . . . The same power that sustained the patriarchs, that gave Caleb and Joshua faith and courage, and that made the work of the apostolic church effective, has upheld God's faithful children in every succeeding age.

The Holy Spirit was the highest of all gifts that He [Jesus] could solicit from His Father for the exaltation of His people. The Spirit was to be given as a regenerating agent, and without this the sacrifice of Christ would have been of no avail. The power of evil had been strengthening for centuries, and the submission of men to this satanic captivity was amazing. Sin could be resisted and overcome only through the mighty agency of **the third person of the Godhead**, who would come with no modified energy, but in the fullness of divine power.

The Holy Spirit is an effective helper in restoring the image of God in the human soul.” {The Faith I Live By 52}

“The Lord says this because He knows it is for our good. He would build a wall around us, to keep us from transgression, so that His blessing and love may be bestowed on us in rich measure. This is the reason we have established a school here. The Lord instructed us that this was the place in which we should locate, and we have had every reason to think that we are in the right place. We have been brought together as a school, and we need to realize that **the Holy Spirit, who is as much a person as God is a person**, is walking through these grounds, that the Lord God is our keeper, and helper. He hears every word we utter and knows every thought of the mind.”--Ms 66, 1899, p. 4. (Talk, April 15, 1899).

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.-- Evangelism, p. 615.

There are those who have allowed themselves to be deceived by the devil to believe that the Holy Spirit is simply the influence of Jesus Christ or God the Father. This is a lie of Satan that more and more are falling for.

Note these words of warning from Jesus. "Wherefore I say unto you, All manner of sin and blasphemy shall be forgiven unto men: but the blasphemy against the Holy Ghost shall not be forgiven unto men. And whosoever speaketh a word against the Son of man, it shall be forgiven him: but **whosoever speaketh against the Holy Ghost, it shall not be forgiven him, neither in this world, neither in the world to come.**" Matthew 12:31, 32

When we deny that the Holy Spirit is an individual, a person with a personality, who can "bear witness to our spirits and with our spirits," then we are speaking against the Holy Spirit and are on more than dangerous ground.

This deception makes no sense to me. What is the advantage or disadvantage to our salvation if the Holy Spirit is a person or just an influence? I can't think of one. Let me explain. God could have decided to use His influence (spirit) to do the work that needs to be done in our lives, and that would have worked just as well as His choosing to have a third person of the Godhead accomplish it. Both methods would have been equally effective.

But God chose to use a third person, an individual, not an influence. Satan is very aware of what Jesus said about our relationship with the Holy Spirit and I believe this is the reason why he is doing his best to lead God's people into this deception. Satan knows that once he can get them to believe it and promote it, he has them, forever!

"The Spirit of God keeps evil under the control of conscience. When people exalt themselves above the influence of the Spirit, they reap a harvest of iniquity. . . . Warnings have less and less power over them. They gradually lose their fear of God. They sow to the flesh; they will reap corruption. The harvest of the seed that they themselves have sown is ripening. . . . Their heart of flesh becomes a heart of stone. Resistance to truth confirms them in iniquity. . . . All should be intelligent in regard to the agency by which the soul is destroyed. It is not because of any decree that God has sent out against men or women. He does not make them spiritually blind. God gives sufficient light and evidence to enable them to distinguish truth from error. But He does not force them to receive truth. He leaves them free to choose the good or to choose the evil. If people resist evidence that is sufficient to guide their judgment in the right direction and choose evil once, they will do this more readily the second time. The third time they will still more eagerly withdraw from God and choose to stand on the side of Satan. And in this course they will continue until they are confirmed in evil and believe the lie they have cherished as truth." {Manuscript 126, 1901}

"Korah would not have taken the course he did had he known that all the directions and reproofs communicated to Israel were from God. But he might have known this. God had given overwhelming evidence that He was leading Israel. But Korah and his companions rejected light until they became so blinded that the most striking manifestations of His power were not sufficient to convince them; they attributed them all to human or satanic agency. The same thing was done by the people, who the day after the destruction of Korah and his company came to Moses and Aaron, saying, "Ye have killed the people of the

Lord." Notwithstanding they had had the most convincing evidence of God's displeasure at their course, in the destruction of the men who had deceived them, they dared to attribute His judgments to Satan, declaring that through the power of the evil one, Moses and Aaron had caused the death of good and holy men. It was this act that sealed their doom. They had committed the sin against the Holy Spirit, a sin by which man's heart is effectually hardened against the influence of divine grace. "Whosoever speaketh a word against the Son of man," said Christ, "it shall be forgiven him: but whosoever speaketh against the Holy Ghost, it shall not be forgiven him." Matthew 12:32. These words were spoken by our Saviour when the gracious works which He had performed through the power of God were attributed by the Jews to Beelzebub. **It is through the agency of the Holy Spirit that God communicates with man; and those who deliberately reject this agency as satanic, have cut off the channel of communication between the soul and Heaven.**

God works by the manifestation of His Spirit to reprove and convict the sinner; and if the Spirit's work is finally rejected, there is no more that God can do for the soul. The last resource of divine mercy has been employed. The transgressor has cut himself off from God, and sin has no remedy to cure itself. There is no reserved power by which God can work to convict and convert the sinner. "Let him alone" (Hosea 4:17) is the divine command. Then "there remaineth no more sacrifice for sins, but a certain fearful looking for of judgment and fiery indignation, which shall devour the adversaries." Hebrews 10:26, 27. {Patriarchs and Prophets 404, 405}

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