

# The Holy Spirit—A Person Or An Influence

## Lesson 1

### INTRODUCTION:

1. "There is no subject more important in religion than that of the Holy Spirit. Unless this be properly understood, a large portion of the Bible, and especially of the New Testament, must remain unintelligible. On the other hand, a just view of it will do more than a knowledge of any other particular topic to give harmony, clearness, and consistency to what may be learned to all other matters presented in the word of God." ("The Office of The Holy Spirit," Richardson, p. 11).
2. "Christianity is differentiated from all the other religions by the fact that it offers its followers a spiritual dynamic in living up to its precepts. The dynamic is the Holy Spirit, which sets the word of God on fire, warms the church from coldness to enthusiasm, and strengthens the Christian with a power not his own in the great battle between the flesh and the spirit." ("The Spirit And The Word." Z. T. Sweeney, p. 5).
3. It is a sad, but true, commentary that many people do not think of the Holy Spirit as a person. "There is much confusion and superstition about the Holy Spirit in the minds of people." (Boles, p. 27).
4. The Bible abounds in evidence about the Holy Spirit and to refuse to accept such testimony is to refuse the testimony of God and Christ.
5. Is the Holy Spirit a person or an influence; Consider the evidence.

### DISCUSSION:

- I. *The work of the Holy Spirit proclaims personality.* Read the following verses and in the blank that follows list the particular work the Holy Spirit does.

- A. John 14:26 \_\_\_\_\_
- B. John: 15:26 \_\_\_\_\_
- C. John 16:7, 8 \_\_\_\_\_
- D. John 16:13, 14 \_\_\_\_\_
- E. Acts 16:6, 7 \_\_\_\_\_
- F. 1 Tim. 4:1 \_\_\_\_\_
- G. Are these works of a person or an influence? \_\_\_\_\_

- II. *The Holy Spirit has the characteristics of a person.* Read the following verses and in the blank that follows list the characteristic.

- A. Neh. 9:20 \_\_\_\_\_
- B. Rom. 8:27 \_\_\_\_\_
- C. Rom. 15:30 \_\_\_\_\_
- D. 1 Cor. 2:11 \_\_\_\_\_
- E. 1 Cor. 12:11 \_\_\_\_\_
- F. Are these characteristics of a person or an influence? \_\_\_\_\_

III. *The Holy Spirit has the characteristics of a divine being.*

A. The Holy Spirit is a member of the Godhead or Deity.

1. The Godhead is mentioned in the following verses:
  - a. "Forasmuch then as we are the offspring of God, we ought not to think that the Godhead is like unto gold, or silver, or stone, graven by art and man's device." (Acts 17:29).
  - b. "For the invisible things of him from the creation of the world are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made, even his eternal power and Godhead; so that they are without excuse. (Rom. 1:20).
  - c. "For in him dwelleth all the fulness of the Godhead bodily." (Col. 2:9).
2. The term Godhead means:
  - a. *Theios*, divine (from *theos*, God) is used of God, 2 Pet. 1:3, and of His nature, v. 4, in, each place as that which proceeds from himself.
  - b. "In Acts 17:29, it is used as a noun with the definite article, to denote 'the Godhead,' the Deity (i. e. the one true God). This word, instead of *theos*, was purposely used by the apostles in speaking to Greeks on Mars Hill, as in accordance with Greek usage." (Vine).
  - c. *Theiotes*, divinity, the R. V. rendered in Rom. 1:20 (A.V. "Godhead") is derived from *theios*, in Col. 2:9, 'Godhead.'
    - (1) In Rom. 1:20, the apostle "is declaring how much may be known from the revelation of himself which He has made in nature . . . Yet it is not the personal God whom any man may learn to know by these aids; He can only be known by revelation of himself in his Son . . ."
    - (2) In Col. 2:9, Paul is declaring that in the Son there dwells all the fullness of the absolute Godhead; they were no mere rays of Divine glory . . . but He was, and is, absolute and perfect God . . ."
3. In many verses the members of the Godhead are mentioned and the Holy Spirit is one of them. Read the following verses and list the members of the Godhead mentioned and the name by which each one is called.
  - a. "And Jesus, when he was baptized, went up straightway out of the water: and, lo, the heavens were opened unto him, and he saw the Spirit of God, descending like a dove, and lighting upon him: and lo a voice from heaven saying, This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased." (Matt. 3:16, 17).

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  - b. "Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost." (Matt. 28:19).

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  - c. "And when the Comforter is come, whom I will send unto you from the Father, even the Spirit of truth, which proceedeth from the Father, he shall testify of me." John 15:26).

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  - d. "For there are three that bear record in heaven, the Father, the Word, and the Holy Ghost; and these three are one." (1 Jn. 5:7).

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  - e. List one other New Testament verse where all three members of the Godhead are named.

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- B. Read the following verses and then list the particular divine attribute or characteristic the Holy Spirit is said to have.

1. "Whither shall I go from thy spirit? or whither shall I flee from thy presence? If I ascend up into heaven, thou art there: if I make my bed in hell, behold, thou art there. If I take the wings of the morning, and dwell in the uttermost parts of the sea; even there shall thy hand lead me, and thy right hand shall hold me: (Psa. 139:7-10).

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2. "But truly I am full of power by the spirit of the Lord, and of judgment, and to might, to declare unto Jacob his transgression, and to Israel his sin." (Micah 3:8).

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3. "But God hath revealed them unto us by his Spirit: for the Spirit searcheth all things, yea, the deep things 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." (1 Cor. 2:10, 11).

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4. "How much more shall the blood of Christ, who through the eternal Spirit offered himself without spot to God, purge your conscience from dead works to serve the living God?" (Heb. 9:14).

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C. There are many areas in which the Holy Spirit has worked, is working, or will work, all of which manifest divinity. From these verses list that particular area.

1. "In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth. And the earth was without form and void; and darkness was upon the face of the deep. And the Spirit of God moved upon the face of the waters." (Gen. 1:1, 2). "By his spirit he hath garnished the heavens; his hand hath formed the crooked serpent." (Job 26:13). "The spirit of God hath made and the breath of the Almighty hath given me life." (Job. 33:4).

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2. "But if I cast out devils by the Spirit of God, then the kingdom of God is come unto you." (Matt. 12:28).

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3. "Jesus answered, Verily, verily, I say unto thee, Except a man be born of water and of the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God." (John 3:5).

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4. "But if the Spirit of him that raised up Jesus from the dead dwells in you, he that raised up Christ from the dead shall also quicken your mortal bodies by his Spirit that dwelleth in you." (Rom. 8:11).

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#### CONCLUSION:

1. What is your conclusion about the Holy Spirit—a person or an influence?

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2. In one brief statement tell why you believe the Holy Spirit is or is not a divine person?

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3. Do you think it makes any difference how one believes it? If so, why or why not?

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