

An Attempt To Listen To God

The Trinity
The Deity of The Holy Spirit

By

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The Trinity - The Deity of the Holy Spirit.

Introduction

The doctrine of the Holy Spirit is a theme presented in the scriptures from Genesis 1:2 to Revelation 22:17, yet this Holy member of the Godhead is greatly neglected by many. The result is that many believers are hindered in their Spiritual development and are similar to the saints who said: "We have not so much as heard whether there be any Holy Ghost" (Acts 19:2). Why is this? I suggest several reasons:

- a) The first is because there is so little taught about Him. He is not the Father, therefore we do not pray to Him. He is not the Son, so we do not remember Him. He is seen in a misty, mystical sort of a way, somewhat like a warm feeling flowing all over you, or an inward urge to do something. This is false and is a distinct insult to the Holy Spirit of the Living God. In my 53 years of being a believer, and in many thousands of meetings to the best of my knowledge, I have never heard a message on the Holy Spirit. I am sure there has been, but I have never heard any. I am aware that there have been articles written about Him, but it seems that is where it ends. The result is the lack of teaching concerning the Holy Spirit in our churches. The result is that when those who are the leaders among the people of God have a small appreciation of His Deity, person, and works, it will result in the people of God being the same. All are in a state of ignorance concerning Him.
- b) The second reason is because people are inclined to believe that He is not a real Person because they are reading "modern translations with words apparently left out, or changed, etc." They are using the KJV, and at least twice over they read of the Spirit as an "It."
 - i) Rom. 8:16 - "The Spirit itself beareth witness with our Spirit."
 - ii) Rom. 8:26 - "The Spirit itself maketh intercession for us."
- c) It may also be due, in part, to a misunderstanding of the words of our Lord when He said He shall not speak of Himself (Jn. 16:13). The reality is that the Holy Spirit speaks constantly of Himself (Gen. 1:2; Isa. 11:2; Zech. 4:1-7; Rom. 5:5; 2 Cor. 13:14; Titus 3:5); being the Author of the New Testament as well as the Old. It simply means He will not speak independently of God.
- d) It is a fact that we are never instructed, neither is there any examples in the Scriptures of anyone praying to the Holy Spirit or putting their faith in Him. We can pray to the Lord Jesus and the Father. We put our faith in the Lord Jesus (Jn. 3:16) and the Father (Rom. 4:24) but never in the Holy Spirit.

That which we are contending for is that the Holy Spirit is a real Person and fully God. It is my belief that the doctrine of the "trinity" is a fundamental doctrine of the Scriptures, and that necessitates the deity of the Holy Spirit. Because the word "trinity" is not in the scriptures, and staying to scriptural phraseology we will speak of the Godhead, concerning which there are three persons; Father, Son, and Holy Spirit (Acts 17:29; Rom. 1:20; Col. 2:9). Never in the scriptures do we read of the first, second, and third person of the Godhead, for such terminology indicates degrees of importance or superiority in some way. However, in the recognition that there is an order, there have been several ideas presented as to the "why" of the order.

- 1) There has been presented the argument of "procession" since the Holy Spirit "proceeds" and is "sent":
 - a) "The Spirit of truth, which proceedeth from the Father." (Jn. 15:26)
 - b) "The Comforter is come, whom I will send unto you from the Father." (Jn. 15:26)
 - c) "If I depart, I will send Him unto you." (Jn. 16:7)
- 2) Another thought is that it may have to do with "times" of working. The Lord said: "My Father worketh hitherto, and I work" (Jn. 5:17), thus indicating that pre the incarnation, the Father was principally at work in the world. When the Lord came He was the one principally at work in the world, and after His ascension and the coming of the Holy Spirit, it is He who is principally at work.

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Having said that it is of note that the persons of the Godhead are mentioned together 34 times in the New Testament. In 13 of these the Father is first, in 9 the Son is first, and in 12 the Holy Spirit is first.

While there are many “trinities” in false religions and cults, there is only one Godhead.
See Attached Addendum “A”.

It needs to be restated that our only sources of knowledge concerning the Holy Spirit is found within the pages of the scriptures and the teachings of the Lord. Since the written Word and Living word are our only sources, anything outside of them is error. It is of note that Adam was given the responsibility of naming the animals, but he was never given the work of naming God; he was made in the “likeness and image” of God, but could never reveal God. Only a divine person could reveal another divine person.

- 1) There are three glorious persons in the Godhead, co-equal in every characteristic and attribute, and co-existent from eternity.
- 2) Each of these three separate and distinct individuals has their own work, but one in essential being, substance, being Spirit, character, and purpose, so that there is no variation of inherent being, or degrees of "Godhood."

The following table presents attributes and characteristics said only of divine persons.

Characteristic / Ability	Father	Son	Holy Spirit
Creator	Gen. 1:1	Jn. 1:2	Job 26:13
Creation of man	Gen. 2:7	Col. 1:16	Job 33:4
Deity	Eph. 4:6	Rom. 9:5	1 Pet. 4:14
Eternal	Psa. 90:2	Mic. 5:2	Heb. 9:14
Holiness	Rev. 15:4	Acts 3:14	Matt. 1:18
Indwelling	Eph. 4:6	Jn. 14:23	Jn. 14:17
Inspiration	2 Tim. 3:16	1 Pet. 1:11	2 Sam. 23:2-3
Love	1 Jn. 4:10	Gal. 2:20	Rom. 15:30
Omnipotence	1 Pet. 1:5	2 Cor. 12:9	Zech. 4:6
Omnipresent	Psa. 139:7-8	Matt. 18:20	Psa. 139:7
Omniscience	Jer. 17:10	Rev. 2:23	1 Cor. 2:11
Resurrection power	Acts 2:24	Jn. 10:18	1 Pet. 3:18
Sanctifier	Jude 1:1	Heb. 2:11	1 Cor. 6:11
Security	Jn. 10:29	Rom. 8:34	Eph. 4:30
Truth	Jn. 7:28	Jn. 14:6	1 Jn. 5:6

The Phrases “Holy Ghost and Holy Spirit”

In the Scriptures, among His many names two are predominant:

- 1) “**Holy Spirit**” - used in 4 verses. (Lk. 11:13; Eph. 1:13; 4:30; 1 Thess. 4:8)
 - a) This refers to: “When as his mother Mary was espoused to Joseph, before they came together, she was found with child of the Holy Ghost.” (Matt. 1:18)
- 2) “**Holy Ghost**” in 89 verses.
 - b) This refers to: “Building up yourselves on your most Holy faith, praying in the Holy Ghost.” (Jude 1:20)

Several observations need to be made:

- 1) The word “Spirit”, when referring to Him, is at times used alone, but “Ghost” is never alone.
- 2) The adjectives used in conjunction with Him are always used of the Spirit. We never read of the “Ghost of wisdom” or the “Ghost of faith”, yet they are used in connection with the Spirit. (Eph. 1:17; 2 Cor. 4:13)
- 3) Then the question is: “Is there a difference of persons or attributes indicated by these terms?”

The Greek word in both cases is the same, and contextually they refer to one person. Personally, I have never understood why translators use two words when “Spirit”, despite being translated less in that way, would be better suited for:

- 1) The word “Ghost” carries the idea of a misty, mystical sort of a being, and between this and the Holy Spirit referred to as “it”, leaves many wondering what is this “Holy Ghost”? Is it like:
 - a) A warm feeling flowing all over you after a certain hymn is sung in a particular way. For instance: to sing “See from His head, His hands His feet, sorrow and love flow mingled down” at a fast beat or loudly, it would not have an emotional impact. When at the Billy Graham crusades, and they sang “Just as I am”, did it have an emotional pull? At such times it can be very hard to distinguish between the Holy Spirit or ones own Spirit. The Holy Spirit is not like a warm fuzzy feeling.
 - b) Is it an inward urge to do something that came upon the Judges. (Jud. 3:10; 6:34: 14:6)
 - c) Is it just a strong personality that we ascribe divine attributes?
 - d) Maybe it is not a “He”, but an “It”.
 - i) If we are to take the Holy Spirit is an “it”, an influence; can a warm fuzzy feeling then bear witness with our Spirit? “The Spirit itself beareth witness with our Spirit” (Rom. 8:16).
 - ii) Could a mere influence give me any assurance that would satisfy me relative to my salvation?
 - iii) Again: “The Spirit itself maketh intercession for us” (Rom. 8:26).
 - iv) Could a mere influence pray to God for me?

Both terms refer to the same person, so there is not a body of truth related to this divine person as the Holy Ghost and another as the Holy Spirit.

For many of us the Holy Spirit is not a real person. As Mr. E. Hopkins said: “He is a person with all the faculties of the Saviour. He has intelligence, love and a will of His own”. Rees Howells added when the Spirit of God was made real to him: “I saw Him as a person apart from flesh and blood, and He said to me: ‘As the Saviour had a body, so I dwell in the body of the believer’.” (Rees Howells Intercessor by Norman Grubb) Because we do not pray to the Holy Spirit, there is the possibility that while verbally we acknowledge Him, yet we can easily fail to see Him as a real living person.

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The reason for the word being translated “it” is because the word “pneuma” (Spirit) is neuter and therefore, being neither male or female, makes it to be an “it”. However, in Koine Greek there is no difference between grammatical and personal gender and consequently, to make the living person an “it” is error.

This is a dreadful error. Let me make this very clear. I believe completely and absolutely, and without any reservation, that the original scriptures, in words, placement of expressions, jot and tittle, were all inspired by God. Any change, or misrepresentation of any word or phrase, in a deliberate manner, is a most severe sin. However, I cannot affirm that the King James Version (KJV) is the absolute and only uniquely inspired translation in the entire world, nor even in the English language. In fact, it may come as a shock to some to realize that there is no such a thing as an inspired translation. But, if I do say that the KJV is the ONLY version, and that it is alone the inspired Word of God, then we have a problem. We cannot just change the word "Itself" to suit our ideas.

What Are We To Do?

A fundamental law of understanding in everyday speech and Biblical interpretation is context. It determines the meaning of the words. For instance, I could say: "My wife made a beautiful skirt"; or concerning a politician: "No matter what the question is, he will skirt the problem"; or when going toward the city, John suggested we skirt it by staying on the freeway". In all three cases we have used the word "skirt" but in entirely different contexts. In the first case the "skirt" was an article of clothing, whereas in the second case it means to "evade", and in the third it means to border. How foolish it would be to transpose the meanings. Imagine saying: "My wife made a beautiful problem"; and the politician "makes an article of clothing from every question." This would be completely foolish. So the word translated "Itself" must be translated considering the context, therefore, because of context it is translated in the following ways:

Word	Reference	Word	Reference	Word	Reference
Yourselves	Mk. 6:31	They	Matt. 5:5	Same	Rom. 2:3
Thyself	Lk. 6:42	Other	Lk. 14:32	This	Matt. 11:14
There	Lk. 24:18	Who	Acts 15:27	Therein	Mk 10:15
Thereinto	Lk. 21:21	Itself	1 Cor. 11:14	Together	Lk. 17:35
Selfsame	2 Cor. 7:11	One	2 Cor.13:11	Whom	Rom. 11:36
Things	1 Pet. 1:12	Self	1 Pet. 2:24	Same	Matt. 3:4
Herself	Heb. 11:11	Whose	Lk. 6:6	Thereon	Matt. 21:7
Thereat	Matt. 7:13	Said	Mk. 6:22	Which	Mk. 15:43
His	Matt 5:22	Her	Rom. 9:12	Them	Matt. 6:8
To them	Rom. 15:28	Myself	Rom. 7:25	Ye	Rom. 15:14
It	Rom. 7:17	Very thing	Rom. 13:6	Thereof	Rom. 6:12
Him	Rom. 6:9	Beside	2 Pet. 1:5	Theirs	Matt. 5:10

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It will be immediately seen how fragile it is to build a doctrine on a word that has at least 36 ways of being translated. Again I emphasize, the word must always be translated according to context.

To use Rom. 8:16 or verse 26 as the basis for making the Holy Spirit an "It", and in doing so, denying Him of deity, it is building a teaching on sandy ground. Notice how these words are translated in the following translations and paraphrases.:

- 1) N.A.S. - "The Spirit Himself"
- 2) Williams - "The Spirit Himself"
- 3) Beck. v26 - "The Spirit Himself"
- 4) Amp. - "The Spirit Himself"
- 5) Jerusalem - "The Spirit Himself"
- 6) Newberry - "The Spirit Himself"
- 7) N.I.V. - "The Spirit Himself"

In every case the word "autos" is translated by "Himself." The force of the word "autos" is to stress a point, thus, namely the individual is a real person. This is supported by the following references:

- 1) "The Spirit, HIMSELF beareth witness" (Rom. 8:16)
- 2) "Also Sarah HERSELF" (Heb. 11:11)
- 3) "Who His own SELF bare our sins" (1 Pet. 2:24)

Furthermore, we read in:

- 1) "The Father . . . shall give you another Comforter, that **HE** may abide with you." (Jn. 14:16)
- 2) "The Spirit of truth, which proceedeth from the Father, **HE** shall testify of me." (Jn. 15:26)
- 3) "If I depart, I will send **HIM** unto you." (Jn 16:7)
- 4) "When, **HE** the Spirit of truth, is come, **HE** will guide . . . **HE** shall not speak of **HIMSELF**; but whatsoever **HE** shall hear, that shall **HE** speak: and **HE** will shew you things to come." (Jn. 16:13)

The Holy Spirit is explicitly referred to as "**He**."

The Designations Of The Holy Spirit

Designation	Reference	Designation	Reference
The Spirit of God	Gen. 1:2	The Spirit of truth	1 Jn. 4:6
The Spirit of the Lord	Jud. 3:10	The Spirit of holiness	Rom. 1:4
The Spirit of wisdom and understanding	Isa. 11:2	The Holy Spirit/Ghost	Lk. 11:13
The Spirit of knowledge and of the fear of the Lord	Isa. 11:2	Thy Spirit	Neh. 9:30
The Spirit of grace and supplication	Zech. 12:10	The Spirit that dwelleth in us	Jam. 4:5
The Spirit of the Lord GOD	Isa. 61:1	The Spirit of promise	Eph. 1:13
The Spirit of grace	Heb. 10:29	The Spirit of life	Rom. 8:2
The Spirit of your Father	Matt. 10:20	The Spirit of judgment	Isa. 28:6
The Spirit of Christ	Rom. 8:9	The Spirit of glory and of God	1 Pet. 4:14

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Designation	Reference	Designation	Reference
The Spirit of His Son	Gal. 4:6	Another Spirit	Num. 14:24
The Spirit of prophecy	Rev. 19:10	Thy Holy Spirit	Psa. 51:11
The Spirit of counsel and might	Isa. 11:2	Thy Spirit	Psa. 139:7
The Spirit of the Holy Gods	Dan. 4:8	His Spirit	Num. 11:29
The Spirit of the gods	Dan. 5:14	Another Comforter	Jn. 14:16
The Spirit of our God	1 Cor. 6:11	The Comforter	Jn. 14:26
The Spirit of Jesus Christ	Phil. 1:19	The good Spirit	Neh. 9:20
The Spirit of adoption	Rom. 8:15	The promise of the Father	Acts 1:4
Holy Spirit / Holy Ghost	Lk. 11:13; Jn. 7:39	The anointing. This is the Holy Spirit as a comparison with Jn. 14:26	1 Jn. 2:27
My Spirit	Gen. 6:3	An unction Compare Jn. 14:26; 16:13	1 Jn. 2:20
An excellent Spirit	Dan. 5:12	The seven Spirits of God	Rev. 3:1
The Spirit of judgment, and by the Spirit of burning	Isa. 4:4	The Holy Spirit of God	Eph. 4:30
The Spirit of wisdom	Ex. 28:3	Thy free Spirit	Psa. 51:12
The Spirit of Jesus Christ	Phil. 1:19	Eternal Spirit	Heb. 9:14
The Spirit of the living God	2 Cor. 3:3	The power of the Highest	Lk. 1:35

But having a name does not prove it is a person. More is needed, therefore, the scriptures teach that He can do things. Listed below in table format is described the following:

- 1) His activities.
- 2) He can be:
- 3) He has:

1) **His Activities:**

Activities of The Holy Spirit			
Activity	Reference	Activity	Reference
Leads	Matt. 4:1	Convicts	Jn. 16:7
Drives	Mk. 1:12	Creates	Gen. 1:2

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Activities of The Holy Spirit			
Speaks	Matt. 10:20	Brings all things to remembrance	Jn. 14:26
Teaches	Lk. 12:12	To guide you into all truth	Jn. 16:13
Bears witness	1 Jn. 4:2	To empower	Lk. 24:49
Reveals	1 Cor. 2:10	Gives men skill	Ex. 31:3
Searches	1 Cor. 2:10	Testifies of Christ	Jn. 15:26
Intercedes	Rom. 8:26	Glorifies Christ	Jn. 16:14
Comforts	Jn. 16:7	He is poured out for mans's enlightenment and sanctification	Prov. 1:23
Foretells	1 Tim. 4:1	Can given supernatural insight and foresight & utterance	2 Sam. 23:2 1 Chron. 28:12 2 Chron. 15:1
Comprehends	Matt. 11:27		

2) **He Can Be:**

The Holy Spirit Can Be:			
	Reference		Reference
Lied to	Acts 5:3	Quenched	1 Thess. 5:19
Tempted	Acts 5:9	Grieved	Eph. 4:30
Resisted	Acts 7:51	Blasphemed	Matt. 12:31

3) **He Has:**

The Holy Spirit Has:			
	Reference		Reference
A mind	Rom. 8:27	Knowledge	1 Cor. 2:11
A love	Rom. 15:30	A sword	Eph. 6:17
A will	1 Cor. 12:11	Power	Rom. 15:19

Word Pictures Of The Holy Spirit

Word Pictures			
	Reference		Reference
Wind	Ezek. 37:9 & 14. (R.V.)	Water	Isa. 45:25 (R.V.) Ezek. 36:25-27
Fire	Isa. 4:4 Acts. 2:3-4	Dove	Matt. 3:16
Earnest	Eph. 1:14 2 Cor. 1:22	Firstfruits	Rom. 8:23
Oil in the context of anointing	Acts 10:38 2 Cor. 1: 22-23	Seal	Eph. 1:13; 4:30

Is The Holy Spirit Distinct From God?

I have only been able to find four references in the Old Testament that bring out the distinctions between the persons of the Godhead. Later when we come to the New Testament, the distinction between all three Persons becomes very clear. These passages are:

- 1) Genesis 1:2 reads: "And the Spirit of God moved."
- 2) Genesis 6:3 reads: "My Spirit shall not always strive with man."

Now, all would agree that on their own these verses do not really prove much of a distinction. One could easily argue that the Spirit of God is simply another way of speaking about the same person.

However in:

- 1) Isaiah 48:16 reference is made to: "Me, the LORD, and the Spirit."
- 2) Again in ch. 61:1 reference is made to: "the Spirit, Me, and the LORD."

With these two references there can be no mistaking. Not only is there a distinction made between God and the Spirit, but the Trinity is strongly stated.

Is The Holy Spirit God?

His deity is also strongly indicated from Matt.12:32 where we are taught by our Lord about the sin of blasphemy. In the account of the conception of our Lord the Holy Spirit is paralleled with the Power of the Highest (Lk. 1:35).

The Strongest Evidence For The Deity Of The Holy Spirit Comes From The Plain Word of God.

- 1) In Acts 5:3 Ananias has been asked: "Why lie to the Holy Ghost?" Then verse 4 reads: "Thou hast not lied unto men, but unto God." When Ananias's spouse came in and told the same tale, Peter said in verse 9: "Ye have agreed together to tempt the Spirit of the Lord." This leaves no room for doubt that the Holy Spirit is God.
- 2) Again, in Psa. 95:6-9 reads: "Worship . . . before the LORD our maker. For He is our God; . . . Today if ye will hear His voice, harden not your heart." Coming to Heb. 3:7-9, this quotation originates with the Holy Spirit: "Wherefore the Holy Ghost saith today if ye hear His voice." This means that the Holy Spirit is not just a "God", but that He is on such equality with the LORD (Jehovah) of the Old Testament that what God says, the Holy Spirit says, and vice versa.

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- 3) Again, in Jer. 31:33 the LORD says: "This shall be the covenant that I will make." Coming to Heb. 10:15-16 we read: "Whereof the Holy Ghost . . . after that He had said before, this is the covenant." Clearly, that which comes from Jehovah, when applied to the Holy Spirit, strongly indicates deity.
- 4) Finally, in 1 Cor. 2:11 we read: "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." The point is clear, the Spirit of man is really the man, therefore, the Spirit of God is God.

Summary

In summarizing we have distinctively plain scriptural evidence, which points to the fact that:

- 1) The Holy Spirit is a real Person.
- 2) The Holy Spirit is distinct from God.
- 3) The Holy Spirit is God.

ADDENDUM "A"

Cults Which Deny The Trinity

1) Religions Which Have Man Made Trinities:

- a) The religions of India, where man worships the trinity of Brahma, Siva and Vishnu, along with other gods and goddesses.
- b) The ancient Egyptians had the trinity of Osiris, Isis and Horus, along with other gods and goddesses.
- c) Buddhism and their trinity of Buddha, Dharma, and Sangha, along with other gods and goddesses.

2) The Cults Which Deny The Trinity

- a) Christian Science teaches that: "Life, truth and love constitute the triune Person called God. God is the Father-Mother; Christ is the Spiritual idea of sonship".
- b) Spiritualism teaches that the doctrine of the trinity seems to have no adherents in the advanced circles of the Spirit world. The divinity of Christ as co-equal with the Father is universally denied.
- c) Jehovah's Witnesses teach that: "The obvious conclusion is that Satan is the originator of the trinity doctrine." (LG p101)
- d) Mormonism teaches that: "There are three gods".
- e) Way International teaches that: "The Trinitarian dogma degrades God from His elevated unparalleled position."
- f) Monarchianism and its associated forms taught that there is one God and the "Son" is an attribute, not the same in substance, and probably not even a person. To a certain degree, each of the forms of Monarchianism teaches that the Father suffered as the Son, and that Jesus was God only to the extent that He was like God. The Son was not eternal, but generated. He was the first transcendent Creature. His glorification, as the risen Christ, earned Him the right to be recognized as the Son of God. He may be, or is divine, but He is not Deity.
- g) Tritheism. This doctrine taught that there were three gods.
- h) Arianism Arius taught that Christ the Son was not the same in substance as the Father.
- i) Unitarianism teaches that God is one Being.
- j) Polytheism....the belief in many Gods.

**May God grant us good understanding as He, by His Holy Spirit, deigns to guide us into all truth.
John 16:13**

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