

## **WHY BAPTISTS BELIEVE WHAT BAPTISTS BELIEVE, PART 13**

### ***WHO IS THE HOLY SPIRIT?***

So, tell me, who is the Holy Spirit? Well obviously, He is a spirit. He's invisible. He is God. The King James Version refers to Him often as "the Holy Ghost." When I was a young boy that conjured up all sorts of images in my mind. But the Holy Spirit is not just some mysterious, ethereal, vague and shadowy apparition. He is a Person. He is, in fact God. He is holy. He is part of the Triune Godhead.

In the Bible, the Holy Spirit manifests Himself, He appears in a physical form, in various ways. The two most prominent pictures are that of a dove (at Jesus' baptism) and as tongues of fire (at Pentecost). One other manifestation was that of wind, which also occurred at Pentecost. The Bible also pictures the Holy Spirit symbolically in water (John 7:37-39), breath (2 Timothy 3:16), oil (1 Samuel 16:13), and a still small voice, "a low whisper" (1 Kings 19:12).

We Baptists fundamentally believe that the Holy Spirit is a part of the Trinity - Father, Son and Holy Spirit. The Baptist Faith and Message says this under the heading "God the Holy Spirit" (note all of the personal pronouns used): "The Holy Spirit is the Spirit of God, fully divine. He inspired holy men of old to write the Scriptures. Through illumination He enables men to understand truth. He exalts Christ. He convicts men of sin, of righteousness, and of judgment. He calls men to the Savior, and effects regeneration. At the moment of regeneration, He baptizes every believer into the Body of Christ. He cultivates Christian character, comforts believers, and bestows the spiritual gifts by which they serve God through His church. He seals the believer unto the day of final redemption. His presence in the Christian is the guarantee that God will bring the believer into the fullness of the stature of

Christ. He enlightens and empowers the believer and the church in worship, evangelism, and service.”

That brings us to the first question on your sheet. *[Question 1]*. Like the Father and the Son, the Spirit is a **Person**. The Bible refers to the Holy Spirit not as an “it,” but uses the personal pronouns “He” and “Him.” Furthermore, we believe that He is **God**, in every way **equal** with the Father and the Son.

The Holy Spirit is prominent throughout the Bible. He is not just in the New Testament. He is mentioned by name more than 70 times in the Old Testament (“Spirit,” “Spirit of God,” “Spirit of the Lord”). Both David (Psalm 51:11) and Isaiah (Isaiah 63:10-11) refer to Him as “Holy Spirit.” The Holy Spirit is especially prominent in the New Testament. We begin to see Him clearer as part of the Triune Godhead. In the New Testament He is mentioned more than 230 times. Let’s look at some of those.

*[Question 2]* “For it is not you who speak, but the Spirit of your Father speaking through you” (Matthew 10:20). -- Spirit of your **Father**

“When the Spirit of truth comes, He will guide you into all the truth, for He will not speak on His own authority, but whatever He hears He will speak, and He will declare to you the things that are to come” (John 16:13). -- Spirit of **Truth**

“For the law of the Spirit of life has set you free in Christ Jesus from the law of sin and death” (Romans 8:2). -- Spirit of **Life**

“Do you not know that you are God’s temple and that God’s Spirit dwells in you?” (1 Corinthians 3:16). -- Spirit of **God**

“You, however, are not in the flesh but in the Spirit, if in fact the Spirit of God dwells in you. Anyone who does not have the Spirit of Christ does not belong to Him” (Romans 8:9). -- Spirit of **Christ**

“Now the Lord is the Spirit, and where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is freedom” (2 Corinthians 3:17). -- Spirit of the **Lord**

In Him [Christ] you also, when you heard the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation, and believed in Him, were sealed with the promised Holy Spirit” (Ephesians 1:13). -- **Promised Holy Spirit**

“How much more will the blood of Christ, who through the eternal Spirit offered Himself without blemish to God, purify our conscience from dead works to serve the living God” (Hebrews 9:14). -- **Eternal Spirit**

“How much worse punishment, do you think, will be deserved by the one who has trampled underfoot the Son of God, and has profaned the blood of the covenant by which he was sanctified, and has outraged the Spirit of grace?” (Hebrews 10:29). -- Spirit of **Grace**

Jesus taught His disciples a lot about the Holy Spirit. The last night that He was with them Jesus spent the time talking to them in the upper room (John Chapters 14 thru 16). We will be looking at several verses from these chapters. For now, let’s look at one of those. “But the Helper, the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in My name, He will teach you all things and bring to your remembrance all that I have said to you” (John 14:26).

[Question 3]. ““But the **Helper**, the Holy Spirit, whom the **Father** will send in My name, He will **teach** you all things and bring to your **remembrance** all that I have said to you.” Jesus refers to the Holy Spirit here as the “Helper” (ESV and NASB), “Comforter” (KJV), “Advocate” (NIV, NET, NLT).

The Greek word translated as “Helper” or “Comforter” or “Advocate” in this verse is *paraclete*, which literally means “one called along beside.” So it is a rather complicated word to translate. For those of us who know Jesus Christ as our personal

Lord and Savior, the Holy Spirit is our companion and friend. He is One who is there with us to encourage and help and guide and warn us. He is the One who energizes, who strengthens, who empowers us. He is this same One that Jesus promised would be sent by the Father. What I want you to see is that Jesus tells His disciples that the Holy Spirit will be sent. He tells them this just prior to His death.

Fast forward in time... Jesus is arrested, crucified, resurrected, appears to His followers, teaches them over a period of several weeks. Now it is time for Him to go back to the Father, to ascend back to Heaven. He and His disciples walk up to the top of the Mount of Olives. "And while staying with them He [Jesus] ordered them not to depart from Jerusalem, but to wait for the promise of the Father, which, He said, 'you heard from Me'; for John baptized with water, but you will be baptized with the Holy Spirit not many days from now... But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you, and you will be My witnesses in Jerusalem and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the end of the earth" (Acts 1:4-5, 8).

*[Question 4]* Just prior to being taken up into Heaven, what did Jesus tell the disciples? I gave you a helpful hint. Jesus actually told them TWO things regarding their future mission. First, He said **that they would receive power**. Second, He said **that they would be His witnesses**.

Every biblical reference to the filling of the Holy Spirit, in both the Old and New Testaments is related to power being supplied by God for a specific purpose, for service, for action, for proclaiming God's truth. So, God gave us, His followers, His power thru the Holy Spirit in order that we might be bold witnesses for Him. As we go through this lesson, we will talk about some other things the Holy Spirit does in our life. But I wanted to start there.

The Holy Spirit possesses the attributes of God because, after all, He IS GOD. The Baptist Faith and Message says, "The Holy Spirit is the Spirit of God, fully divine." Let's look at just a few of His attributes.

*[Question 5]* "For the law of the Spirit of life has set you free in Christ Jesus from the law of sin and death" (Romans 8:2). -- He **produces spiritual life**.

"When the Spirit of truth comes, He will guide you into all the truth..." (John 16:13) -- He **declares the truth**.

"I appeal to you, brothers, by our Lord Jesus Christ and by the love of the Spirit, to strive together with me in your prayers to God on my behalf" (Romans 15:30). -- He is the **source of love**.

"And do not grieve the Holy Spirit of God, by whom you were sealed for the day of redemption" (Ephesians 4:30). -- He is God's seal who **preserves our eternal salvation**; our security.

"How much more will the blood of Christ, who through the eternal Spirit offered Himself without blemish to God..." (Hebrews 9:14). -- He is **eternal**, no beginning, no end.

"Where shall I go from your Spirit? Or where shall I flee from your presence?" (Psalm 139:7). -- He is **omni-present**, everywhere.

So, I just wanted to show you some of the attributes the Holy Spirit possesses to establish that He is God.