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# *The Holy Spirit In Scripture*

## The Doctrine of the Holy Spirit – Part 1

### Various Passages

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*Back in the 70's, I was doing a pilot group for the burgeoning small group bible study movement. The first group I led was made up of the pastor and future small group leaders. The second group was a bit more diverse, but was still made up of people who had been in the church a number of years.*

*One of the studies was on basic doctrines, specifically teachings on the Holy Spirit. No one seemed to have a clear understanding about this subject. What really floored me was when one of the individuals, a board member, referred to the Holy Spirit as "it" and seemed to believe "it" was simply a manifestation of God the Father's power. As one of the "spiritual" leaders of our Body, his understanding of both the Triunity and the Holy Spirit was sadly lacking. But then again, I'm not sure this lack isn't endemic to the church at large.*

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This morning we are going to continue our ongoing series of studies on the basic doctrines of the faith. Previously we have examined how we got the Bible; the Triunity of God; God the Father; and, God the Son. This morning we begin a two-part series on the Doctrine of the Holy Spirit.

As with the previous sections, much of what will be covered is based on the work of Alan B. Stringfellow in volume 3 of the Through The Bible In One Year material.<sup>1</sup> The study is certainly not intended to be comprehensive, but hopefully will encourage you to do some more study of this topic on your own.

Finally, there are aspects of the work of the Holy Spirit which are debated by different wings of Christianity. Generally these disagreements are over secondary issues and therefore are not related to issues of salvation. This being the case, it is appropriate to agree to disagree and not to behave as if those who hold views different from our own are either unbelievers or, at best, a sub-class of believers.

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- I INTRODUCTION**
  - II THE HOLY SPIRIT IN THE OLD TESTAMENT**
  - III THE HOLY SPIRIT IN THE NEW TESTAMENT**
  - IV THE HOLY SPIRIT AT PENTECOST**
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<sup>1</sup>Stringfellow, Alan B., "Great Truths of the Bible," Through The Bible In One Year, Virgil W. Hensley, Inc., Publisher, Tulsa, OK, 1981.

**Introduction:** First, some obvious statements. The Holy Spirit is the third person of the Trinity of God. (see the study on the Doctrine of the Trinity.) Note, He is God and He has person-hood. He is not simply a manifestation of God's power. He is found in the Old as well as the New Testament. And, though He has a unique role with the Church, He was active before the birth of the Church and will be after the Rapture.

First, we know the Holy Spirit has person-hood because He acts. Paul notes this:

*“The Spirit searches all things, even the deep things of God. For who among men knows the thoughts of a man except the man's spirit within him? In the same way no one knows the thoughts of God except the Spirit of God” (1 Corinthians 2:10-11).*

Second, we know the Holy Spirit is God. Hodge notes:

*“ Since the fourth century his true divinity has never been denied by those who admit his personality.”*<sup>2</sup>

There are so many references demonstrating the deity of the Holy Spirit that I can't give them all here, but two are:

*“As soon as Jesus was baptized, he went up out of the water. At that moment heaven was opened, and he saw the Spirit of God descending like a dove and lighting on him” (Genesis 1:2; Matthew 3:16).*

I think part of the problem with the understanding of the Holy Spirit may relate to the old usage of the term “Holy Ghost.” This was probably a poor choice of the translators because of the connotation the word “ghost” has for the modern reader. As Stringfellow notes:

*“ In our English language the words “Spirit” or “Ghost” take on the connotation of “an evil spirit who possesses a person” or “a ghost is one who haunts a house; an inhabitant of the unseen world who might appear in a bodily likeness”; “a demon” etc.”*<sup>3</sup>

In this first session I want to focus on the Holy Spirit as seen in the Old and the New Testaments. We will also focus specifically on His role at Pentecost.

**The Holy Spirit in Creation:** Just as Jesus, the Holy Spirit was involved in the work of Creation, being part of the Godhead and in existence prior to that historical moment.

*“In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth. Now the earth was formless and empty, darkness was over the surface of the deep, and the Spirit of God was hovering over the waters” (Genesis 1:1-2).*

The psalmist describes the role of the Holy Spirit in psalm 33.

*“By the word of the LORD were the heavens made, their starry host by the breath of his mouth. He gathers the waters of the sea into jars; he puts the deep into storehouses. Let all the earth fear the LORD; let all the people of the world revere him. For he spoke, and it came to be; he commanded, and it stood firm” (Psalm 33:6-9).*

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<sup>2</sup> Walvoord, John F., The Holy Spirit, Zondervan Publishing House, Grand Rapids, MI, 1954. p. 8.

<sup>3</sup> Stringfellow, p. 55.

He was involved in all aspects of the creation, and for our interest, specifically with the creation of Man. We know that because the words “us” and “our” is referring to God speaking within His Godhead, to the observers of His work, the heavenly host.

*“Then God said, “Let us make man in our image, in our likeness, and let them rule over the fish of the sea and the birds of the air, over the livestock, over all the earth, and over all the creatures that move along the ground.” So God created man in his own image, in the image of God he created him; male and female he created them” (Genesis 1:26-27).*

**The Holy Spirit manifest in the Old Testament:** While the Holy Spirit did not indwell men in the same way He does the post-Pentecost believer, He did come upon men. Keep in mind no one could turn to God or walk in obedience without the involvement of the Holy Spirit.

*“I will come down and speak with you there, and I will take of the Spirit that is on you and put the Spirit on them. They will help you carry the burden of the people so that you will not have to carry it alone.” ... “The Spirit of the LORD came upon him, so that he became Israel’s judge and went to war. The LORD gave Cushan-rishathaim king of Aram into the hands of Othniel, who overpowered him” (Numbers 11:17; Judges 3:10).*

The Holy Spirit was poured out and rested upon men.

*“... till the Spirit is poured upon us from on high, and the desert becomes a fertile field, and the fertile field seems like a forest.” ... “Then the LORD came down in the cloud and spoke with him, and he took of the Spirit that was on him and put the Spirit on the seventy elders. When the Spirit rested on them, they prophesied, but they did not do so again. However, two men, whose names were Eldad and Medad, had remained in the camp. They were listed among the elders, but did not go out to the Tent. Yet the Spirit also rested on them, and they prophesied in the camp” (Isaiah 32:15; Numbers 11:25-26).*

Before moving on to the Holy Spirit in the New Testament, I want to quote Stringfellow in a listing of general information related to references of the Holy Spirit in the Old Testament:

- a. *The Holy Spirit is mentioned some 88 times in the Old Testament. These are widely spaced over the cannon, found in 22 of the 39 Old Testament Books.*
- b. *In the Pentateuch ... we find 14 references and these are found in only 4 books. Leviticus has no references.*
- c. *Two of the prophetic books, Isaiah and Ezekiel, have 15 references each.*
- d. *The other books, Judges and I Samuel have 7 references each; II Samuel, 1 reference; Psalms has 5. This leaves 24 references in 11 books.”<sup>4</sup>*

**The Holy Spirit in the New Testament – Prior to Pentecost:** There are four areas we can examine when discussing the Holy Spirit in the New Testament. They are prior to Pentecost, Pentecost, The Church, and His future work after the Rapture. First, I want to consider the

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<sup>4</sup> Stringfellow, p. 57.

role of the Holy Spirit prior to Pentecost. Here we will see what Jesus said about the Holy Spirit prior to Pentecost.

First, of course we see the Holy Spirit's involvement with Christ's baptism.

*“As soon as Jesus was baptized, he went up out of the water. At that moment heaven was opened, and he saw the Spirit of God descending like a dove and lighting on him. And a voice from heaven said, “This is my Son, whom I love; with him I am well pleased.”” (Matthew 3:16-17).*

Next we see that the Holy Spirit was the One who led and taught Jesus in His ministry.

*“The Spirit of the Lord is on me, because he has anointed me to preach good news to the poor. He has sent me to proclaim freedom for the prisoners and recovery of sight for the blind, to release the oppressed,” ... “For the one whom God has sent speaks the words of God, for God gives the Spirit without limit” (Luke 4:18; John 3:34).*

Jesus talked about the role of the Holy Spirit in His involvement with His and His disciples' ministry and work. For example, Salvation is due to the work of the Holy Spirit.

*“Jesus answered, “I tell you the truth, no one can enter the kingdom of God unless he is born of water and the Spirit. Flesh gives birth to flesh, but the Spirit gives birth to spirit” (John 3:5-6).*

The Holy Spirit would be involved in the work of the disciples.

*“Whenever you are arrested and brought to trial, do not worry beforehand about what to say. Just say whatever is given you at the time, for it is not you speaking, but the Holy Spirit” (Mark 13:11).*

Jesus taught that baptism was to be carried out in the name of the Triune God.

*“Therefore go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit” (Matthew 28:19).*

**The Holy Spirit in Pentecost:** The Holy Spirit's involvement in Pentecost changed the dynamic by which He is involved with those who follow after the Lord. I am not focusing on issues of the “Gifts of the Spirit” in this context. I will touch on the subject in the second part of this series, next Sunday.

Jesus was the one who announced the changing role of the Holy Spirit when He promised the Spirit's coming to His disciples.

*“On one occasion, while he was eating with them, he gave them this command: “Do not leave Jerusalem, but wait for the gift my Father promised, which you have heard me speak about. For John baptized with water, but in a few days you will be baptized with the Holy Spirit.” ... “But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit*

*comes on you; and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth” (Acts 1:4-5, 8).*

Christ promised something new and different.

*“But the Counselor, the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in my name, will teach you all things and will remind you of everything I have said to you.” ... “When the Counselor comes, whom I will send to you from the Father, the Spirit of truth who goes out from the Father, he will testify about me.” ... “But I tell you the truth: It is for your good that I am going away. Unless I go away, the Counselor will not come to you; but if I go, I will send him to you.” ... “I have much more to say to you, more than you can now bear. But when he, the Spirit of truth, comes, he will guide you into all truth. He will not speak on his own; he will speak only what he hears, and he will tell you what is yet to come” (John 14:26, 15:26, 16:7, 12-13).*

So what is different after Pentecost? First, the Holy Spirit now indwells the corporate body of Christ, the Church.

*“Consequently, you are no longer foreigners and aliens, but fellow citizens with God’s people and members of God’s household, built on the foundation of the apostles and prophets, with Christ Jesus himself as the chief cornerstone. In him the whole building is joined together and rises to become a holy temple in the Lord. And in him you too are being built together to become a dwelling in which God lives by his Spirit.” ... “Don’t you know that you yourselves are God’s temple and that God’s Spirit lives in you? If anyone destroys God’s temple, God will destroy him; for God’s temple is sacred, and you are that temple” (Ephesians 2:19-22; 1 Corinthians 3:16-17).*

Second, He not only indwells the corporate body, but also individual believers.

*“... the Spirit of truth. The world cannot accept him, because it neither sees him nor knows him. But you know him, for he lives with you and will be in you” (John 14:17)*

Third, this indwelling is permanent, which in turn guarantees our spiritual discernment.

*“But the Counselor, the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in my name, will teach you all things and will remind you of everything I have said to you” (John 14:26).*

Finally, we should not forget what happened at Pentecost. First, believers were baptized with the Spirit. Jesus said:

*“For John baptized with water, but in a few days you will be baptized with the Holy Spirit” (Acts 1:5).*

They were also filled with the Spirit.

*“All of them were filled with the Holy Spirit and began to speak in other tongues as the Spirit enabled them” (Acts 2:4).*

Next week we will finish looking at the Holy Spirit in the New Testament by looking at His names, His involvement with believers today, etc. But here let's finish up with some summary information on references in the New Testament. Again quoting Stringfellow:

*There are 262 Passages in the New Testament which mention the Holy Spirit.*

- a. These 262 passages are found in 24 of the 27 books of the New Testament. The only books in which the Holy Spirit is not mentioned are Philemon and II and III John.*
- b. The four Gospels, Matthew, Mark, Luke and John contain 56 passages referring to the Holy Spirit.*
- c. The Acts of the Apostles (known also as the Acts of the Holy Spirit) contain 57 references to the Holy Spirit.*
- d. Paul's Epistles contain 113 passages referring to the Holy Spirit.*
- e. The other books, General Epistles and Revelation, contain 36 references to the Holy Spirit.<sup>5</sup>*

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<sup>5</sup> Ibid., p. 61-62.

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### **A. Introduction:**

*(1 Corinthians 2:10-11; Genesis 1:2; Matthew 3:16)*

### **B. The Holy Spirit in Creation:**

*(Genesis 1:1-2; Psalm 33:6-9; Genesis 1:26-27)*

### **C. The Holy Spirit manifest in the Old Testament:**

*(Numbers 11:17; Judges 3:10; Isaiah 32:15; Numbers 11:25-26)*

## General information related to references of the Holy Spirit in the Old Testament:

- a. *The Holy Spirit is mentioned some 88 times in the Old Testament. These are widely spaced over the cannon, found in 22 of the 39 Old Testament Books.*
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## **D. The Holy Spirit in the New Testament – Prior to Pentecost:**

*(Matthew 3:16-17; Luke 4:18; John 3:34, 3:5-6; Mark 13:11; Matthew 28:19)*

## **E. The Holy Spirit in Pentecost:**

*(Acts 1:4-5, 8; John 14:26, 15:26, 16:7, 12-13; Ephesians 2:19-22; 1 Corinthians 3:16-17; John 14:17, 26; Acts 1:5, 2:4)*

## General information on references in the New Testament.

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