

# I Believe in the Holy Spirit

(The Essential Christian Truth About the Nature of the Holy Spirit)

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## What Kind of “Spirit” Are We Talking About?

It's easy for us to make a simple statement such as the one found in the Apostle's Creed (“We believe in the Holy Spirit”), if we simply fail to define who or what the Holy Spirit is! But once a definition is proposed, most of us find ourselves separating from others who hold to a different definition. Let's look at some of the differing ways that people have understood the Holy Spirit:



### **The Religions and Cults that Deny the Trinity**

*Jehovah's Witnesses, Christadelphians, Unitarians, the Christian Family Fellowship and the Unification Church (Moonies) teach that the Holy Spirit is God's spirit or God's active and impersonal force (like radar or electricity), and not an actual person. Some Christadelphians believe that one way God uses his Holy Spirit is in the form of his angels.*



### **The Islamic Faith**

*Islam teaches that the Holy Spirit is an agent of divine action or communication commonly identified with the angel Gabriel who delivered the words of the Koran to Muhammad.*



### **The Bahá'í Faith**

*Bahá'í believers, recognize the Holy Spirit, also known as the “Most Great Spirit”, as the “bounty of God”. It is usually used to describe the descent of the Spirit of God upon the messengers (prophets) of God, which are known as “Manifestations” of God, and include (among others) Jesus, Muhammad and Bahá'u'lláh. The Holy Spirit is the conduit through which the wisdom of God becomes directly associated with His messenger, and it has been described in different religions as “the burning bush” (when the Spirit appeared to Moses), the “sacred fire” (as recognized by Zoroaster), the “dove” (as the Spirit appeared to Jesus), the “Angel Gabriel” (as He appeared to Muhammad), and the “Holy Maiden” (as the Spirit appeared to Bahá'u'lláh).*



### **The “Oneness Pentecostal” Faith**

*Oneness Pentecostals (like Orthodox Christians) believe that Jesus had two natures while he was walking the earth. He was both God and man. But Oneness Pentecostals also believe that God is now in the “form/mode/manifestation” of the Holy Spirit. The Holy Spirit is simply God the Father in another form. They make a careful distinction here: the Holy Spirit is not a coexistent person within the Godhead, along with the Father and the Son, but is instead, God the Father in another “mode”.*



### **The Mormon Faith**

*Mormonism distinguishes between the “Holy Spirit” and the “Holy Ghost”. The Holy Spirit is understood as God's presence via an essence that fills the immensity of space and enables God to know what is going on (in this sense, the Spirit is likened to electricity). The Holy Ghost is understood as the third god in the polytheistic Mormon doctrine of the gods. The Holy Ghost is a “spirit man” and can only be at one place at one time.*



### **The Jewish Faith**

*Although most Jews consider the Holy Spirit to be a thoroughly Christian concept, the Holy*

*Spirit stems from a Hebrew figure of speech, the “ruah ha-qodesh”. In Jewish usage, however, this concept was never identified with a separate person, but with a Divine power which could fill men, as, for instance, the prophets.*



## **So, Which Is It (and Why Does It Really Matter)?**

So, are any of these views of the Holy Spirit actually true? Who is the Holy Spirit? Is the Spirit a force? Is the Spirit an Angel? A conduit of wisdom? Another form of the Father or the Son? A God? A divine person within the triune God? This question may not seem like it is all that important, but the answer determines (in large part) how it is that you and I will worship. The answer determines how we are to relate to (and react to) the Holy Spirit. If the Holy Spirit is a divine person, our worship is going to be radically different than if it is an emanation, influence or force from God.

If the Spirit is a mysterious force or wonderful power, then shouldn't we be learning how to grasp and utilize this power from God? If, on the other hand, the Spirit is a person within the triune nature of God, shouldn't He be worthy of our praise, adoration and love? As we begin to think about the nature of the Holy Spirit, it's important for us to recognize the two views of the Holy Spirit that are typically promoted:

- 1. The Holy Spirit is something that we must grasp and utilize*
- 2. The Holy Spirit is God Himself and has the power to grasp and utilize US.*

There is a big difference in these two views of the Spirit, and how we come to understand the Holy Spirit's nature will definitely have an impact on how we live and worship as believers.



## **Let's Get to the Truth: The “Personhood” of the Holy Spirit**

As we examine the Biblical text, several key characteristics emerge as we study the nature of God's Holy Spirit. The first and foremost feature of the Spirit is the characteristic of “Personhood”. Over and over again, the scriptures describe the Holy Spirit as a PERSON rather than a force emanating from God. Let's examine the case for the “personhood” of the Holy Spirit, using just a few of the possible verses that support the Biblical case:



### **Personal Pronouns as Descriptors**

The clearest indication of the “personhood” of the Holy Spirit is simply the fact that PERSONAL pronouns are used when the Holy Spirit is being referenced.



#### **Acts 13:2**

*While they were ministering to the Lord and fasting, the Holy Spirit said, "Set apart for Me Barnabas and Saul for the work to which I have called them."*



#### **Acts 10:19**

*While Peter was reflecting on the vision, the Spirit said to him, "Behold, three men are looking for you. But get up, go downstairs and accompany them without misgivings, for I have sent them Myself."*

Jesus also refers to the Holy Spirit as a person:



#### **John 15:26**

*"When the Helper comes, whom I will send to you from the Father, that is the Spirit of truth who proceeds from the Father, He will testify about Me"*

The Spirit of Truth illuminates our minds with the truth of God's knowledge:



### **John 16:13-14**

*“But when He, the Spirit of truth, comes, He will guide you into all the truth; for He will not speak on His own initiative, but whatever He hears, He will speak; and He will disclose to you what is to come. He will glorify Me, for He will take of Mine and will disclose it to you.”*



### **Personal Characteristics of Knowledge, Feeling and Will**

When we say that the Holy Spirit is a person, we don't mean that He has hands, feet, eyes, ears and a mouth! Those are the characteristics of “corporeity”, not “personality”. Those are PHYSICAL characteristics, not PERSONAL characteristics. The characteristics of personality are knowledge, feeling (or emotion) and will. The Bible attributes these kinds of personal characteristics to the Holy Spirit. Here, for example, we see the Holy Spirit's ability to KNOW:



### **1 Corinthians 2:10-11**

*For to us God revealed them through the Spirit; for the Spirit searches all things, even the depths of God. For who among men knows the thoughts of a man except the spirit of the man which is in him? Even so the thoughts of God no one knows except the Spirit of God.*

The Holy Spirit is described as having a knowledge of US that is even better than the knowledge we have of ourselves!



### **Romans 8:26-27**

*In the same way the Spirit also helps our weakness; for we do not know how to pray as we should, but the Spirit Himself intercedes for us with groanings too deep for words; and He who searches the hearts knows what the mind of the Spirit is, because He intercedes for the saints according to the will of God.*

Here we recognize the fact that in addition to the characteristic of knowledge, the Holy Spirit also has possesses the characteristic of emotion, love and feeling:



### **Romans 15:30**

*Now I urge you, brethren, by our Lord Jesus Christ and by the love of the Spirit, to strive together with me in your prayers to God for me...*

The Bible tells us that The Holy Spirit has the ability to love. But that's not all. The Spirit also has the ability to be 'grieved':



### **Ephesians 4:30**

*Do not grieve the Holy Spirit of God, by whom you were sealed for the day of redemption.*

An impersonal force or power cannot have knowledge, cannot love and cannot be grieved. But in addition to demonstrating personal characteristics of knowledge and feeling, the Holy Spirit also demonstrates the personal characteristic of Free Will:



### **1 Corinthians 12:11**

*But one and the same Spirit works all these things, distributing to each one individually just as He wills.*

The Scriptures indicate that the Holy Spirit (often compared to the wind) has a mind and will of His own:



### **John 3:5-8**

*Jesus answered, "Truly, truly, I say to you, unless one is born of water and the Spirit he cannot enter into the kingdom of God. That which is born of the flesh is flesh, and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit. Do not be amazed that I said to you, 'You must be born again.' The wind (Spirit) blows where it wishes and you hear the sound of it, but do not know where it comes from and where it is going; so is everyone who is born of the Spirit."*

## **3 Personal Actions**

Yet another characteristic of personhood is displayed by the Holy Spirit; the ability to ACT as an independent person who is able to make a CHOICE. This ability to choose to act is a definitive characteristic of personhood, and the Holy Spirit demonstrates the ability to act in a number of ways. The Spirit acts as a creator, He testifies as a witness, He intercedes on our behalf, and He teaches and guides believers. Let's begin by looking at the Spirit's creative activity:



### **Job 33:4**

*"The Spirit of God has made me, and the breath of the Almighty gives me life."*

The Spirit gives life. He creates. But in addition to this, the Spirit also grants ETERNAL life:



### **Revelation 2:7**

*He who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches to him who overcomes, "I will grant to eat of the tree of life which is in the Paradise of God."*

The Holy Spirit also acts to testify as a witness:



### **Romans 8:16**

*The Spirit Himself testifies with our spirit that we are children of God*

And the Spirit helps us and intercedes on our behalf



### **Romans 8:26**

*In the same way the Spirit also helps our weakness; for we do not know how to pray as we should, but the Spirit Himself intercedes for us with groanings too deep for words;*

The Spirit also teaches and guides us:



### **John 14:26**

*"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 said to you."*



### **Nehemiah 9:20**

*"You gave Your good Spirit to instruct them, Your manna You did not withhold from their mouth, And You gave them water for their thirst."*

**John 16:13-14**

*“But when He, the Spirit of truth, comes, He will guide you into all the truth; for He will not speak on His own initiative, but whatever He hears, He will speak; and He will disclose to you what is to come. He will glorify Me, for He will take of Mine and will disclose it to you.”*

**Romans 8:14**

*For all who are being led by the Spirit of God, these are sons of God.*

**Acts 16:6-7**

*They passed through the Phrygian and Galatian region, having been forbidden by the Holy Spirit to speak the word in Asia; and after they came to Mysia, they were trying to go into Bithynia, and the Spirit of Jesus did not permit them*

**Personal Offices**

In addition to all this independent activity on the part of the Holy Spirit, the Bible also recognizes the fact that the Spirit is said to hold specific ‘offices’ (or positions) that are typically held only by a person. The Spirit is said to be a “helper”, a “comforter” or an “advocate”:

**John 14:16-17**

*“I will ask the Father, and He will give you another Helper, that He may be with you forever; that is the Spirit of truth, whom the world cannot receive, because it does not see Him or know Him, but you know Him because He abides with you and will be in you.”*

**1 John 2:1**

*My little children, I am writing these things to you so that you may not sin and if anyone sins, we have an Advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous*

**John 16:7**

*“But I tell you the truth, it is to your advantage that I go away; for if I do not go away, the Helper will not come to you; but if I go, I will send Him to you.”*

The titles given to the Spirit reflect the fact that the Holy Spirit holds particular ‘offices’ that are not held by impersonal forces but are instead common to persons.

**Personal Treatment**

Perhaps this is why the Holy Spirit is TREATED as a person throughout the Scriptures. As you read through the following passages, think about the manner in which the Holy Spirit is addressed or described. Over and over again, the Spirit is treated as though He is a PERSON:

**Isaiah 63:10**

*But they rebelled and grieved His Holy Spirit; Therefore He turned Himself to become their enemy, He fought against them.*

**Hebrews 10:29**

*How much severer punishment do you think he will deserve who has trampled under foot the Son of God, and has regarded as unclean the blood of the covenant by which he was sanctified, and has insulted the Spirit of grace?*



### Acts 5:3

*But Peter said, "Ananias, why has Satan filled your heart to lie to the Holy Spirit and to keep back some of the price of the land? While it remained unsold, did it not remain your own? And after it was sold, was it not under your control? Why is it that you have conceived this deed in your heart? You have not lied to men but to God."*



### Matthew 12:31-32

*"Therefore I say to you, any sin and blasphemy shall be forgiven people, but blasphemy against the Spirit shall not be forgiven. Whoever speaks a word against the Son of Man, it shall be forgiven him; but whoever speaks against the Holy Spirit, it shall not be forgiven him, either in this age or in the age to come."*



### 2 Corinthians 13:14

*The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, and the love of God, and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit, be with you all.*

Over and over again we see that the Holy Spirit is treated as though He is a person, not an impersonal force. He "turns Himself" to become an enemy, He can be insulted, He can be lied to, He can be spoken against and He has fellowship with us as believers.



## Let's Get to the Truth: The "Deity" of the Holy Spirit

We've examined the Biblical evidence for the personhood of the Holy Spirit, so let's now turn to another important Christian truth related to the Spirit: the fact that the Spirit of God is, in fact, GOD! Christianity claims NOT that the Holy Spirit is some kind of force or presence that emanates from God, but that the Holy Spirit IS God. There is a huge difference in this definition. The Bible repeatedly attributes God's own properties of identity, presence, knowledge and power to the Holy Spirit Himself. Let's look at the attributes of the Holy Spirit and see if they are identical to the attributes of God:



### 1 Divine Identity

There are places in the Bible where the Holy Spirit and God the father are mentioned interchangeably; the Spirit therefore takes on the title and identity of God the Father:



### Acts 5:3-4

*But Peter said, "Ananias, why has Satan filled your heart to lie to the Holy Spirit and to keep back some of the price of the land? While it remained unsold, did it not remain your own? And after it was sold, was it not under your control? Why is it that you have conceived this deed in your heart? You have not lied to men but to God."*



### 2 Divine Presence

We also see in the Scripture that the Holy Spirit shares the divine attribute of omnipresence:



### Psalm 139:7-10

*Where can I go from Thy Spirit? Or where can I flee from Thy presence? If I ascend to heaven, Thou art there; If I make my bed in Sheol, behold, Thou art there. If I take the wings of the dawn, If I dwell in the remotest part of the sea, Even there Thy hand will lead me, And Thy right hand will lay hold of me.*

### 3 Divine Love

The attribute of omnibenevolence (divine love) is often attributed to the Holy Spirit:



#### **Romans 15:30-31**

*Now I urge you, brethren, by our Lord Jesus Christ and by the love of the Spirit, to strive together with me in your prayers to God for me...*

### 4 Divine Knowledge

In addition to this, the Bible describes the Holy Spirit as having the attribute of divine omniscience:



#### **1 Corinthians 2:10**

*For to us God revealed them through the Spirit; for the Spirit searches all things, even the depths of God.*



#### **John 16:13-14**

*"But when He, the Spirit of truth, comes, He will guide you into all the truth; for He will not speak on His own initiative, but whatever He hears, He will speak; and He will disclose to you what is to come. He will glorify Me, for He will take of Mine and will disclose it to you."*



#### **John 14:26**

*"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 said to you."*

### 5 Divine Power

And, of course, the Scriptures also attribute divine omnipotence to the Holy Spirit. The Spirit is described as the divine creator of life:



#### **Job 33:4**

*The Spirit of God has made me, and the breath of the Almighty gives me life.*



#### **Psalms 104:29-30**

*You hide Your face, they are dismayed; You take away their spirit, they expire and return to their dust. You send forth Your Spirit, they are created; and You renew the face of the ground.*



#### **John 6:63**

*It is the Spirit who gives life; the flesh profits nothing; the words that I have spoken to you are spirit and are life.*

In addition to these powers, the Spirit is also seen as the power behind the very words of the Prophets and the Bible:



#### **2 Peter 1:21**

*for no prophecy was ever made by an act of human will, but men moved by the Holy Spirit spoke from God.*



#### **2 Samuel 23:2-3**

*The Spirit of the LORD spoke by me, and His word was on my tongue. The God*

*of Israel said, The Rock of Israel spoke to me, "He who rules over men righteously, who rules in the fear of God"*

And finally, the Holy Spirit is recognized as the power behind the Salvation we are offered in Jesus Christ:



**Hebrews 9:14**

*How much more will the blood of Christ, who through the eternal Spirit offered Himself without blemish to God, cleanse your conscience from dead works to serve the living God?*



**Romans 8:11**

*But if the Spirit of Him who raised Jesus from the dead dwells in you, He who raised Christ Jesus from the dead will also give life to your mortal bodies through His Spirit who dwells in you.*



**Divine Union**

The Bible unites the Spirit and equates Him to both God the Father and to Jesus. Many passages mention all three in the same breath in a way that demonstrates the equality of attributes and characteristics that we have already discussed:



**1 Corinthians 12:4-6**

*Now there are varieties of gifts, but the same Spirit. And there are varieties of ministries, and the same Lord. There are varieties of effects, but the same God who works all things in all persons.*



**Matthew 28:19**

*"Go therefore and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit"*



**Let's Get to the Truth: The "Distinction" of the Holy Spirit**

We've examined the Biblical evidence for the personhood of the Holy Spirit and the deity of the Holy Spirit, but there is one more Biblical perspective that we need to examine if we want to get a clear picture of what Christians believe about the Spirit of God. This final characteristic of the Holy Spirit is known as "distinction".



**Distinct from the Father and Son**

From a Christian perspective, the Holy Spirit is NOT an impersonal force that emanates from the true God. Christianity proposes that the Holy Spirit is a personal, all-powerful yet distinct member of the TRIUNE Godhead. Over and over again we see that the Spirit acts in a distinct way:



**Luke 3:21-22**

*Now when all the people were baptized, Jesus was also baptized, and while He was praying, heaven was opened, and the Holy Spirit descended upon Him in bodily form like a dove, and a voice came out of heaven, "You are My beloved Son, in You I am well-pleased."*

And, unsurprisingly, we also see that the Holy Spirit is distinctly mentioned ALONGSIDE the two other members of the Godhead. There are MANY verses where this triune and distinct

relationship is described, revealing all three distinct members of the Godhead in a simultaneous manner:

<i>Matthew 3:16,17</i>	<i>1 Corinthians 6:9-11</i>	<i>Hebrew 2:3,4</i>
<i>Matthew 28:19</i>	<i>1 Corinthians 12:4-6</i>	<i>Hebrew 3:6,7</i>
<i>Luke 1:35</i>	<i>2 Corinthians 1:21,22</i>	<i>Hebrews 6:4-6</i>
<i>Luke 1:67-69</i>	<i>2 Corinthians 3:3, 4</i>	<i>Hebrew 9:14</i>
<i>John 14:16,17</i>	<i>2 Corinthians 5:5-10</i>	<i>Hebrews 10:12-15</i>
<i>John 14:26</i>	<i>2 Corinthians 13:14</i>	<i>Hebrews 10:29-31</i>
<i>John 15:26</i>	<i>Galatians 3:1-5</i>	<i>1 Peter 1:2</i>
<i>John 16:13-15</i>	<i>Galatians 3:11-14</i>	<i>1 Peter 3:18</i>
<i>John 20:21,22</i>	<i>Galatians 4:4-6</i>	<i>1 Peter 4:14-17</i>
<i>Acts 2:33</i>	<i>Ephesians 1:3-14</i>	<i>2 Peter 1:21-2:1</i>
<i>Acts 2:38,39</i>	<i>Ephesians 2:18</i>	<i>1 John 3:21-24</i>
<i>Acts 7:55</i>	<i>Ephesians 2:22</i>	<i>1 John 4:1,2</i>
<i>Acts 10:38</i>	<i>Ephesians 3:4-7</i>	<i>1 John 4:13,14</i>
<i>Acts 10:46-48</i>	<i>Ephesians 3:14-19</i>	<i>1 John 5:6-9</i>
<i>Acts 11:16,17</i>	<i>Ephesians 4:2-6</i>	<i>Jude 20,21</i>
<i>Romans 5:5,6</i>	<i>Ephesians 5:18-20</i>	<i>Revelation 1:4,5</i>
<i>Romans 8:3,4</i>	<i>Colossians 1:7-10</i>	<i>Revelation 1:9,10</i>
<i>Romans 8:8-11</i>	<i>1 Thessalonians 1:5-10</i>	<i>Revelation 2:7</i>
<i>Romans 8:16,17</i>	<i>1 Thessalonians 4:1-8</i>	<i>Revelation 2:26-29</i>
<i>Romans 14:17,18</i>	<i>1 Thessalonians 5:18,19</i>	<i>Revelation 3:5,6</i>
<i>Romans 15:16</i>	<i>2 Thessalonians 2:13,14</i>	<i>Revelation 3:12,13</i>
<i>Romans 15:17-19</i>	<i>1 Timothy 3:15,16 1</i>	<i>Revelation 3:21,22</i>
<i>Romans 15:30</i>	<i>Timothy 4:1-6</i>	<i>Revelation 5:6,7</i>
<i>1 Corinthians 2:8-10</i>	<i>2 Timothy 1:8-14</i>	<i>Revelation 14:12,13</i>
<i>1 Corinthians 2:12-16</i>	<i>Titus 3:4-8</i>	<i>Revelation 22:16-18</i>

Now that's quite a list! We can see that the Holy Spirit is DISTINCT from God the Father, even though He displays all of God's attributes and even though the Scripture clearly teaches that God is ONE (more on that [HERE](#))

### Subordinate to the Father and the Son

Another aspect of this "distinction" of the Holy Spirit is the way in which He CHOOSES to subordinate Himself to the other members of the Godhead. In the same way that Christ was fully God and yet subordinate to the Father, the Holy Spirit is subordinate to both the Father and the Son. It's important for us to remember, however, that this subordination does not mean that the Holy Spirit is in somehow unequal or LESS than God Himself.

James R. White in [The Forgotten Trinity](#) says:

*"Just as the Son voluntarily chose to take the role of Suffering Servant so as to redeem God's people, so too, the Spirit has chosen to take the role as Sanctifier and Advocate of the people of God. But since it is the Spirit's role to direct the hearts of men to Christ, and to conform them to His image, He does not seek to push himself into the forefront and gain attention for himself... difference in function does not indicate inferiority of nature."*



### **John 14:26**

*"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 said to you."*



### **John 15:26**

*"When the Helper comes, whom I will send to you from the Father, that is the Spirit of truth who proceeds from the Father, He will testify about Me"*

The Spirit here is seen as subordinate to both the Father and the Son in the way that He functions as a helper, comforting and helping believers to remember all that Jesus taught, and being sent on this mission by the Father Himself.



## **So, What Kind of "Spirit" Are We Talking About?**

OK, we've looked at three particular and rather exclusive views of the Holy Spirit; His personhood, His deity and His distinctiveness. Let's take a final look at our list of definitions and beliefs and see what distinguishes the Christian View from other world religions:



### **The Religions and Cults that Deny the Trinity**

Jehovah's Witnesses, Christadelphians, Unitarians, the Christian Family Fellowship and the Unification Church (Moonies) teach that the Holy Spirit is God's spirit or God's active and impersonal force.

Christianity disagrees, based on the clear Biblical teaching that the Holy Spirit is a **DISTINCT PERSON** with personal attributes just like God the Father and Jesus.



### **The Islamic Faith**

Islam teaches that the Holy Spirit is an agent of divine action or communication commonly identified with the angel Gabriel who delivered the words of the Koran to Muhammad.

Once again, Christianity disagrees, based on the clear Biblical teaching that the Holy Spirit is a unique person **DISTINCT FROM GOD**, and **NOT** an angel of God.



### **The Bahá'í Faith**

Bahá'í teaches that the Holy Spirit is the conduit through which the wisdom of God becomes directly associated with His messenger, and it has been described in different religions as "the burning bush" (when the Spirit appeared to Moses), the "sacred fire" (as recognized by Zoroaster), the "dove" (as the Spirit appeared to Jesus), the "Angel Gabriel" (as He appeared to Muhammad), and the "Holy Maiden" (as the Spirit appeared to Bahá'u'lláh).

Christianity disagrees, based on the clear Biblical teaching that the Holy Spirit is a **DISTINCT PERSON** with personal attributes of His own and not a mere conduit.



### **The "Oneness Pentecostal" Faith**

Oneness Pentecostals also believe that God is now in the "form/mode/manifestation" of the Holy Spirit. The Holy Spirit is simply God the Father in another form.

Christianity disagrees, based on the clear Biblical teaching that the Holy Spirit presently exists alongside the Father and Jesus as a **DISTINCT DIVINE PERSON** within a triune godhead.



### The Mormon Faith

Mormonism distinguishes between the “Holy Spirit” and the “Holy Ghost”. The Holy Ghost is understood as the third god in the polytheistic Mormon doctrine of the gods.

Christianity disagrees, based on the clear Biblical teaching that there is only ONE God (More on that [HERE](#)), yet the Holy Spirit is a DISTINCT PERSON within the Godhead.



### The Jewish Faith

Jews believe that God’s Spirit is not identified with a separate person, but with a Divine power which could fill men, as, for instance, the prophets.

Christianity disagrees, based on the clear Biblical teaching that the Holy Spirit is a DISTINCT PERSON within the Godhead.

While there are lots of ideas related to the nature of God and His Holy Spirit, it’s easy to see why Christians would reject some of the common notions that are offered by other theists. The Christian essential truth that the Holy Spirit is a distinct person within the triune Godhead has been affirmed for thousands of years. It is one of many Christian essentials that defines us as believers and demarks us uniquely within the community of religions.



### So, How Does This Really Impact Me As a Believer?

OK, we’ve studied quite a bit about the Holy Spirit, but what does all this theology have to do with my understanding of God and how I live out that understanding every day?

#### 1 It Should Impact the Way We Give Thanks

How many times have you offered thanks to God the Father for giving up His Son on the Cross? How many times have you offered thanks to Jesus for dying for our sins? It seems that it is easy for us to offer thanks to these two members of the Godhead, but can you remember the last time you thanks the Holy Spirit for anything? Now that you know a little more about the Spirit, can you see why it would be appropriate to thank the Holy Spirit specifically for His work in your life? Can you see why it might be important to thank the Holy Spirit for being the eternal and infinite Spirit of God who came into this world of sin and darkness to pursue us so patiently? Can you see why it might be important to thank Him for bringing the Word of God to our minds, comforting and helping us to understand all that God has revealed to us in the scriptures and interceding for us? A proper understanding of the nature of the Holy Spirit will change our prayer life.

#### 2 It Should Impact the Way We Worship

We owe our salvation just as much to the love of the Spirit as we do to the love of the Father and the Son. R. A Torrey writes, “But what of the love of the Holy Spirit? He was sent by the Father in answer to the prayer of the Son, leading Him to seek me out in my utter blindness and ruin. He followed me day after day, week after week, and year after year, though I persistently turned a deaf ear to His pleadings, following me through paths of sin where it must have been agony for that holy one to go, until at last I listened. He opened my eyes to see my utter ruin and then revealed Jesus to me as just the Savior who would meet my every need, and then He enabled me to receive this Jesus as my own Savior.” A proper understanding of the love of the Holy Spirit will change the way we worship.

#### 3 It Should Impact the Way We Relate to God

There are some important truths about the Holy Spirit that simply cannot be ignored if we

want to understand the nature of the Triune God of the Bible. If we want to understand the nature of God and understand how he deals with each of us personally and as a family, we need to understand his nature properly. We need to understand that he cares about his children enough to assign important tasks to each member of the Godhead. When we see what God values, we recognize how much He is to be valued. A proper understanding of the role and responsibilities of the Holy Spirit will change the way we relate to God.

The essential Christian concept of the Holy Spirit is not simply an unimportant nuance within the faith we call Christianity. There IS an orthodox position related to the nature of the Spirit; He is a

- 1) Distinct Person within the Triune Godhead,*
- 2) Distinct from the Father and the Son*
- 3) Possessing All the Attributes of Personhood and*
- 4) Possessing All the Attributes of Deity*

This understanding matters to us as Christians because it helps us to live in the truth, reflecting a true understanding of the Holy Spirit. It helps us to trust, thank, worship and relate to the true God of the Universe.