

SYSTEMATIC THEOLOGY

WEEK 4: THE PERSON AND DEITY OF THE HOLY SPIRIT

INTRODUCTION

- We are going to take the next three weeks and think carefully about what the Bible reveals about the person and work of the Holy Spirit.
- Properly this is called *Pneumatology* (Pneuma (πνεῦμα) = Greek for Spirit or spirit.)
- How we view Him is not only important to our daily lives as Christians, but to our eternal destination as well. If we do not know Him as He has revealed Himself in the pages of Scriptures, then we do not know who He truly is.
- The need for *theological clarity*.
 - **Theological Danger:**
 - The Holy Spirit is not a force. He is not a disembodied spirit floating around.
 - **Theological Abuse:**
 - Charismatics, Pentecostals, Continual Revelation, Spiritual Gifts, Mystics, “God told me...,” “God led me...,” ... and the list goes on and on...
 - **Theological Confusion:**
 - Do we invite the Holy Spirit? Is He in us, with us, upon us? How does He operate in our daily lives? Do we pray to Him? Do I need to activate His powers? Can I ever lose Him? Can He ever lose me?
- We do not study or teach about the Holy Spirit enough so I want to go through the copious amount of Scripture with you so that you can have a more robust understanding of who He is and what He has done, continues to do and will do in the future.
- I hope that at the end of these three weeks you will be able to:
 - Recognize your own wrong thinking of the Holy Spirit.
 - Recognize areas in your own life where the Spirit is working and needs to work.
 - Recognize false teaching and false teachers and be able to Biblically show where they are wrong and what steps need to be taken to get back on the right path.
 - Explain to someone who the Holy Spirit is and why we need to know Him.
 - Have a more robust spiritual life which is empowered and guided by the Holy Spirit.

COMMON TRINITARIAN HERESIES¹

Modalism

- ...taught that the three persons of the Trinity as different “modes” of the Godhead. Adherants believed that Father, Son and Holy Spirit are not distinct personalities, but different modes of God's self-revelation.
- A typical modalist approach is to regard God as the Father in creation, the Son in redemption, and the Spirit in sanctification. In other words, God exists as Father, Son and Spirit in different eras, but never as triune. Stemming from Modalism, Patripassianism believed that the Father suffered as the Son.
- T. D. Jakes has long been associated with Oneness Pentecostalism which holds to an unorthodox position on the Trinity. This position is known as Modalism or, historically, as Sabellianism.²
- The "Jesus Only" movement, also known as Oneness Pentecostalism or oneness theology, teaches that there is only one God, but denies the tri-unity of God. In other words, oneness theology does not recognize the distinct persons of the Godhead: Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.
 - It has various forms—some see Jesus Christ as the one God, who sometimes manifests Himself as the Father or the Holy Spirit. The core doctrine of Oneness Pentecostal / Jesus Only is that Jesus is the Father and Jesus is the Spirit. There is one God who reveals Himself in different "modes."³

Tritheism

- ...Tritheism confesses the Father, Son and Holy Spirit as three independent divine beings; three separate gods who share the 'same substance'.
- This is a common mistake because of misunderstanding of the use of the term 'persons' in defining the Trinity.
- Person can be defined as “a center of self-consciousness.” A person has a mind, emotions, and a will, can communicate with others, and is capable of performing actions.
 - When we speak of the concept of personhood as it relates to the Trinity, we are describing self-distinctions in God. All three Persons of the one triune God possess the complete attributes of deity. All three Persons are truly divine, yet eternally distinct from one another. The divine Persons can and do communicate with each other (John 17:1-26; Hebrews 1:8-9).
 - Essentially, God has three centers of self-consciousness. Yet this one Being (the triune God of

¹ <https://www.monergism.com/thethreshold/sdg/Trinitarian%20Heresies.html>

² <https://www.challies.com/articles/the-false-teachers-t-d-jakes/>

³ <https://www.gotquestions.org/oneness-Jesus-only.html>

Scripture) possesses one indivisible essence. There is only one Being that is God, and this one Being is tri-personal, with each of the three Persons having full possession of the divine nature.⁴

Arianism

- ...taught that the preexistent Christ was the first and greatest of God's creatures but denied his fully divine status.
- The Arian controversy was of major importance in the development of Christology during the fourth century and was addressed definitely in the Nicene Creed.

Docetism

- ...taught that Jesus Christ as a purely divine being who only had the "appearance" of being human.
- Regarding his suffering, some versions taught that Jesus' divinity abandoned or left him upon the cross while other claimed that he only appeared to suffer (much like he only appeared to be human).

Ebionitism

- ...taught that while Jesus was endowed with particular charismatic gifts which distinguished him from other humans but nonetheless regarded Him as a purely human figure.

Macedonianism

- Macedoniansim was a fourth-century heresy that denied the full divinity or personality of the Holy Spirit. This idea was popularized by a former bishop of Constantinople, a semi-Arian named Macedonius, and he became the namesake of the belief. Those who denied the Spirit's deity or personality were called Pneumatomachians, which means "opponents of the Spirit" or "Spirit fighters."⁵
- According to the Pneumatomachians (Macedonians), the Holy Spirit was a created entity, subject to the Father and Son, in something of a servant role.
 - This error was addressed and soundly refuted at the Council of Constantinople in AD 381. As a reaction against the growing heresy of Macedonianism, church leaders at this council voted to expand the Nicene Creed to more accurately defend the Holy Spirit as fully God and worthy of worship.
 - With that addition, the creed now reads, "And we believe in the Holy Spirit, the Lord and Giver of Life, who proceedeth from the Father, who with the Father and the Son together is worshiped and glorified, who spoke by the prophets." The Council of Constantinople sought to make it clear that the Holy Spirit is consubstantial (homoousious) with the Father and the Son.⁶

⁴ <https://www.gotquestions.org/Tritheism-Trinity.html>

⁵ <https://www.gotquestions.org/Pneumatomachian-Macedonianism.html>

⁶ <https://www.gotquestions.org/Pneumatomachian-Macedonianism.html>

Adoptionism

- ...taught that Jesus was born totally human and only later was “adopted” – either at his baptism or at his resurrection – by God in a special (i.e. divine) way.

Partialism

- ...taught that Father, Son and Holy Spirit together are components of the one God. This led them to believe that each of the persons of the Trinity is only part God, only becoming fully God when they come together.
- As an analogy, partialism would point out that the Atlantic Ocean is 100 percent water, and the Pacific Ocean is 100 percent water, but the Atlantic Ocean by itself is not 100 percent of all the water that exists. According to partialism, each Person of the Trinity is 100 percent divine in nature, but God is only God when, where, and if all three Persons are unified. Some partialists—but not all—would extend this idea by stating that the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit are each “1/3 of God.”⁷
- Partialism is subject to widely varied applications, making it impossible to declare that all forms of partialism are false or that all forms are true. Still, generally speaking, most interpretations of partialism conflict with well-established interpretations of the Trinity.

THE PERSONHOOD OF THE HOLY SPIRIT

- Christians worship one God; we are *monotheistic*. We worship one God, yet Scripture clearly depicts three persons of the godhead.
 - Thinking of God the Father and God the Son makes more immediate sense to us in that there is a relational component that we are immediately familiar with: that of a father or son.
 - But what are we to do with God the *Spirit*. It’s tempting to think of the 3rd person of the Trinity as cold or distant. But when we listen to the Bible, we see something different.⁸
- The Holy Spirit is a divine person, not just the power or force of God at work in this world.⁹
- We must have a solid belief in the *personhood* of the Holy Spirit. Not that He has a physical body as in a person like you or I, but that He has the make-up of personhood.
- The only person of the Godhead taking humanity upon Himself is Christ.
 - What we do mean is that the Holy Spirit has personal subsistence. He is an intelligent, voluntary, living being, with understanding and will. He has a mind, a will and emotions.

⁷ <https://www.gotquestions.org/Trinity-partialism.html>

⁸ <https://www.capitolhillbaptist.org/resources/core-seminars/series/systematic-theology/>

⁹ Matt Waymeyer, *Theology I*, TMS Syllabus.

- We are going to do the teaching on the Holy Spirit somewhat differently than as we went the teaching on Christ. As this is a harder topic for some to grasp, I want to show you from the Bible very specific passages that you need to know and understand regarding the Holy Spirit.

He possesses attributes of a person

- Knowledge and Intelligence
 - Isaiah 40:3 “Who has directed the Spirit of the LORD, Or as His counselor has informed Him?”
 - 1 Corinthians 2:11 “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.”

He has emotions

- Isaiah 63:10 “But they rebelled And grieved His Holy Spirit; Therefore He turned Himself to become their enemy, He fought against them.”
- Ephesians 4:30 “Do not grieve the Holy Spirit of God, by whom you were sealed for the day of redemption.”

He has a will

- Acts 16:6 “They passed through the Phrygian and Galatian region, having been forbidden by the Holy Spirit to speak the word in Asia...”
- 1 Corinthians 2:11 “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.”

He Loves

- 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...”

He has life

- Romans 8:2 “For the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus has set you free from the law of sin and of death.”
- 1 Corinthians 3:3 “being manifested that you are a letter of Christ, cared for by us, written not with ink but with the Spirit of the living God, not on tablets of stone but on tablets of human hearts.”

Actions of personality

- John 16:13 “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.”
- Acts 8:29 “Then the Spirit said to Philip, ‘Go up and join this chariot.’”
- 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...”
- 1 Corinthians 2:13 “...which things we also speak, not in words taught by human wisdom, but in those taught by the Spirit, combining spiritual thoughts with spiritual words.
- 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?”

Others doing actions towards him

- Isaiah 63:10 “But they rebelled And grieved His Holy Spirit; Therefore He turned Himself to become their enemy, He fought against them.”
- Matthew 12:31 “Therefore I say to you, any sin and blasphemy shall be forgiven people, but blasphemy against the Spirit shall not be forgiven.”
- 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?’”
- Acts 10:19-21 “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.*”

Christians have fellowship with Him

- 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.”
- Philippians 2:1 “Therefore if there is any encouragement in Christ, if there is any consolation of love, if there is any fellowship of the Spirit, if any affection and compassion...”

The Holy Spirit is referred to as “He” in greek and english

- 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.”

- “But the Helper, the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in My name, **He** (*ἐκεῖνος*: *masculine, nominative, singular...demonstrative pronoun referencing back to the Spirit*) 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...”
- 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.”

He is given as a “helper” (παράκλητος)

- 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.”
 - The use of the Greek word ἄλλος (another) here is of significant importance.
 - This is to identify the Holy Spirit as one of the same kind or nature. The Holy Spirit would be the person taking the place of the Son of God in relation to the disciples.
 - The other Greek word ἕτερος (another) means the same but not from the same class. This is where we get *heterosexual*, a man and a woman are both humans but different in gender.
 - Had Jesus wanted to specify that the Holy Spirit was not God, He would have used that word, not the one that He chose.
- 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 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.”

He is distinguished from his own power

- The Holy Spirit *has* power...He is not *a* of power. He possess power as a person. He is not merely an impersonal force of power.
- Luke 4:14 “And Jesus returned to Galilee in the power of the Spirit, and news about Him spread through all the surrounding district.”
- Acts 10:38 “You know of Jesus of Nazareth, how God anointed Him with the Holy Spirit and with power, and how He went about doing good and healing all who were oppressed by the devil, for God was with Him.”

- Romans 15:13 “Now may the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace in believing, so that you will abound in hope by the power of the Holy Spirit.”
- 1 Corinthians 2:4 “...and my message and my preaching were not in persuasive words of wisdom, but in demonstration of the Spirit and of power...”

THE DIETY OF THE HOLY SPIRIT

Divine Descriptions

- 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.’”
 - They lied to the Holy Spirit in verse 3...not man but God in verse 4.
- 1 Corinthians 12:11 “But one and the same Spirit works all these things, distributing to each one individually just as He wills.”
- 1 Corinthians 12:13 “For by one Spirit we were all baptized into one body, whether Jews or Greeks, whether slaves or free, and we were all made to drink of one Spirit.”
- 1 Corinthians 12:18 “But now God has placed the members, each one of them, in the body, just as He desired.”
 - The members of the body are empowered as the Holy Spirit wills, one and the same Spirit. God arranges the members of the body by His desires. The same Spirit.

Divine associations / Trinitarian associations¹⁰

- Matthew 3:16–17 “And when Jesus was baptized, immediately he went up from the water, and behold, the heavens were opened to him, and he saw the Spirit of God descending like a dove and coming to rest on him; and behold, a voice from heaven said, “This is my beloved Son, with whom I am well pleased.”
- Matthew 28:19 “Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit.”
- Luke 1:35 “And the angel answered her, “The Holy Spirit will come upon you, and the power of the Most High will overshadow you; therefore the child to be born will be called holy—the Son of God.”

¹⁰ John MacArthur and Richard Mayhue, eds., *Biblical Doctrine: A Systematic Summary of Bible Truth* (Wheaton, IL: Crossway, 2017), 346.

- John 15:26 “But when the Helper comes, whom I will send to you from the Father, the Spirit of truth, who proceeds from the Father, he will bear witness about me.” (; cf. 14:16, 26; 16:7–10, 14–15)
- Romans 8:11 “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.”
- Romans 15:30 “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.”
- 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.”
- Hebrews 9:13-14 “For if the blood of goats and bulls, and the sprinkling of defiled persons with the ashes of a heifer, sanctify for the purification of the flesh, 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?”
- 1 John 4:2 “By this you know the Spirit of God: every spirit that confesses that Jesus Christ has come in the flesh is from God.”
- Jude 20–21 “But you, beloved, building yourselves up in your most holy faith and praying in the Holy Spirit, keep yourselves in the love of God, waiting for the mercy of our Lord Jesus Christ that leads to eternal life.”
- The magnum opus of Trinitarian passages comes in Ephesians 1:3–14, which speaks of each person’s involvement in the salvation of believers:¹¹
 - God the Father: 1:3–6
 - God the Son: 1:7–12
 - God the Holy Spirit: 1:13–14

Divine Attributes

- **Eternal**
 - 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?”
- **Omnipresence**
 - Psalm 139:7–10 “Where can I go from Your Spirit? Or where can I flee from Your presence? If I ascend to heaven, You are there; If I make my bed in Sheol, behold, You are there. If I take the

¹¹ John MacArthur and Richard Mayhue, eds., *Biblical Doctrine: A Systematic Summary of Bible Truth* (Wheaton, IL: Crossway, 2017), 347.

wings of the dawn, If I dwell in the remotest part of the sea, Even there Your hand will lead me,
And Your right hand will lay hold of me.”

- **Omniscience**

- 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.”

- **Omnipotence**

- Romans 1:4 “...who was declared the Son of God with power by the resurrection from the dead, according to the Spirit of holiness, Jesus Christ our Lord...”

- **Truthfulness**

- 1 John 5:6 “This is the One who came by water and blood, Jesus Christ; not with the water only, but with the water and with the blood. It is the Spirit who testifies, because the Spirit is the truth.”

- **Grace**

- 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?”

- **Life**

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

- **Holiness**

- Matthew 1:18 “Now the birth of Jesus Christ was as follows: when His mother Mary had been betrothed to Joseph, before they came together she was found to be with child by the Holy Spirit.”

- **Glory**

- 1 Peter 4:14 “If you are reviled for the name of Christ, you are blessed, because the Spirit of glory and of God rests on you.”