

WHO IS the HOLY SPIRIT?



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Always Good News.

The Bible teaches that God is three Persons in One: Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. The Holy Spirit and the Father and the Son share the same attributes. Therefore, the Holy Spirit is eternal, having neither beginning nor end (Hebrews 9:14); omnipotent, having all power (Luke 1:35); omnipresent, being present everywhere at the same time (Psalm 139:7); and omniscient, knowing all things (1 Corinthians 2:10–11).

THE HOLY SPIRIT'S PERSONALITY

In the Old Testament, the Holy Spirit came upon people for limited times, empowering them for specific tasks (Exodus 31:1–5; Numbers 24:2). In the New Testament, Jesus talks about the Holy Spirit in the gospel of John, chapters 14–16. Christ describes Him as a Person with intellect, emotions, and will. His presence within each believer is Jesus' special provision for His followers alone. He comes alongside us to advise, exhort, comfort, strengthen, intercede, and encourage us. The Holy Spirit is Jesus' gift, and He makes it possible for Jesus to be in and with each of us.

“And I will pray the Father, and He will give you another Helper, that He may abide with you forever—the Spirit of truth, whom the world cannot receive, because it neither sees Him nor knows Him; but you know Him, for He dwells with you and will be in you” (John 14:16–17).

“But when the Helper comes, whom I shall send to you from the Father, the Spirit of truth who proceeds from the Father, He will testify of Me” (John 15:26).

THE HOLY SPIRIT IN THE BELIEVER

Before Jesus’ ascension into heaven, He told His followers to “*wait for ... the Holy Spirit*” (Acts 1:4–5). This began the fulfillment of the promises about the Holy Spirit given in the gospel of John. From that time until now, every believer shares the power of the Holy Spirit as He:

- Dwells within (1 Corinthians 6:19–20)
- Seals us in Christ (Ephesians 1:13–14)
- Assures us of salvation (Romans 8:16)
- Helps us grasp the truths of Scripture (John 14:26)
- Empowers us to live the Christian life (Romans 8:9, 13–15)
- Develops fruit (character of heart) (Galatians 5:22–23)
- Gives us gifts for serving others (1 Corinthians 12)

In addition, the Holy Spirit works in the following ways both in us and through us:

- He convicts people of sin (John 16:8–11)
- He gives new life to those who trust in Jesus (John 3:6–8; Romans 6:4)
- He speaks (Acts 13:2)
- He intercedes (helps us in prayer) (Romans 8:26)
- He testifies about Jesus (John 15:26)

- He guides (John 16:13)
- He commands (Acts 16:6–7)
- He appoints (Acts 20:28)
- He leads (Romans 8:14)
- He gives power to be Christ’s witnesses (Acts 1:8)

It is the believer’s responsibility to submit to the Holy Spirit. Our choice seriously impacts our spiritual growth and our relationship with God.

The Holy Spirit can be:

- Lied to and tested (Acts 5:3–4, 9)
- Resisted (Acts 7:51)
- Grieved (Ephesians 4:30)
- Blasphemed (shown contempt) (Matthew 12:31)

We are baptized through the Holy Spirit when we become believers. We then have the opportunity and responsibility to be filled with the Holy Spirit, yielding daily to His control. The filling of the Holy Spirit shows itself by the fruit of the Spirit and the gifts of the Spirit.

THE FRUIT AND GIFTS OF THE SPIRIT

As the Holy Spirit develops our understanding of God, we grow toward maturity. The result will be what Scripture describes as fruit.

“The fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, self-control; against such things there is no law”
(Galatians 5:22–23, ESV).

“All Christians should be marked by all the fruit of the Spirit. Put in the simplest terms, the Bible tells us we need the Spirit to bring fruit into our lives because we cannot produce godliness apart from the Spirit. In our own selves we are filled with all kinds of self-centered and self-seeking desires which are opposed to God’s will for our lives.”

—Billy Graham

In addition to the fruit of the Spirit, the Holy Spirit gives every believer at least one gift with which to encourage and strengthen the church. All gifts are not the same, but they all have the same purpose: to unite and build up the church (Ephesians 4:12–13). Paul tells us to desire these gifts (1 Corinthians 12:31). Scripture enumerates the gifts of the Holy Spirit in: Romans 12:6–8; 1 Corinthians 12:8–11; Ephesians 4:11–12.

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GALATIANS 5:22–23, ESV

“These gifts come to us from the Holy Spirit. He chooses who gets which gifts, and He dispenses them at His good pleasure.

While we are held accountable for the use of any gifts He gives us, we have no responsibility for gifts we have not been given. Nor are we to covet what someone else has or be envious of that person. We may wish to have certain gifts and even ask for them, but if it is not the will of the Holy Spirit, we will not get what we ask for. And if we are dissatisfied because the Holy Spirit does not give us the gifts we want, we sin.”

—Billy Graham

THE HOLY SPIRIT SPEAKS

As you continue to learn about the reality of the Holy Spirit in your life, do not be discouraged if you do not entirely understand how the Holy Spirit does His work or how God can be three Persons in One. God is too big to be fully understood by the human mind. However, He wants you to understand as much as you can, and He has already taken the initiative to reveal Himself to you with the goal of becoming an intimate part of your life. He will continue to take that initiative. It is within the context of relationship that you can develop a fuller and more meaningful understanding of God.

The Holy Spirit works in many different ways. He will cause a particular Scripture to speak to your heart; He speaks through other Christians; and He will speak through that quiet voice that some people call their conscience. Don't just listen, but do what He says. The following steps will help you as you work through the process of knowing and maturing in your relationship with the Holy Spirit.

MOVING FORWARD

- 1** Read the “Steps to Peace With God” section. If you have never explored what it means to find the deep satisfaction and purpose in a relationship with Jesus, do so now. If you have already turned your life over to Jesus Christ, make your relationship with Him primary in your life (Matthew 6:33).
- 2** If you have committed your life to Jesus Christ as Savior and Lord, you have received the Holy Spirit. Be confident of this.
- 3** Walk in the confidence of God’s Word. Renounce your own ways, and surrender to the Holy Spirit. This will involve obedience and faith more often than feelings (Colossians 1:9–14). Both of these come from knowing the Scriptures.
- 4** Regularly review the Scriptures concerning the Holy Spirit. Ponder what each verse means in your life. In addition, studying with another more mature Christian or in a small-group Bible study will allow you to develop a stronger foundation.
- 5** Look for evidence of the Spirit in your life and allow Him to identify areas in which He is working or would like to be working.
- 6** Seek to exhibit and cultivate the fruit of love (1 Corinthians 13:13).

ADDITIONAL SCRIPTURE FOR MEDITATION

Matthew 22:29 (the power of understanding)

John 3:6–8 (the Spirit's new birth)

Romans 6:11–13 (death to sin)

Romans 12:1–2 (transformation)

Titus 3:5 (the renewing of the Spirit)

Hebrews 13:5–6 (contentment and confidence)

2 Peter 1:20–21 (inspiration of the Spirit)

FOR FURTHER REFERENCE

The Holy Spirit, Billy Graham

Keep in Step With the Spirit, J.I. Packer

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STEPS TO PEACE WITH GOD

1. RECOGNIZE GOD'S PLAN—PEACE AND LIFE

God loves you and wants you to experience His peace and life.

The BIBLE says, "For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have everlasting life." *John 3:16, NKJV*

2. REALIZE OUR PROBLEM—SEPARATION FROM GOD

People choose to disobey God and go their own way. This results in separation from God.

The BIBLE says, "For all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God." *Romans 3:23, NKJV*

3. RESPOND TO GOD'S REMEDY—THE CROSS OF CHRIST

God sent His Son to bridge the gap. Christ did this by paying the penalty of our sins when He died on the cross and rose from the grave.

The BIBLE says, "But God shows his love for us in that while we were still sinners, Christ died for us." *Romans 5:8, ESV*

4. RECEIVE GOD'S SON—LORD AND SAVIOR

You cross the bridge into God's family when you ask Christ to come into your life.

The BIBLE says, "But to all who did receive him, who believed in his name, he gave the right to become children of God." *John 1:12, ESV*

THE INVITATION IS TO:

REPENT (turn from your sins), ASK for God's forgiveness, and by faith RECEIVE Jesus Christ into your heart and life and follow Him in obedience as your Lord and Savior.

When you make this commitment, you become a new creation in Christ (2 Corinthians 5:17) and a part of His family (John 1:12).

PRAYER OF COMMITMENT: *"Dear God, I know that I am a sinner. I want to turn from my sins, and I ask for Your forgiveness. I believe that Jesus Christ is Your Son. I believe He died for my sins and that You raised Him to life. I want Him to come into my heart and to take control of my life. I want to trust Jesus as my Savior and follow Him as my Lord from this day forward. In Jesus' Name, amen."*

If you've made a new commitment to Christ or would like more information about our ministry, please call us at **1-877-2GRAHAM (1-877-247-2426)** or visit our website, **BillyGraham.org/commitment**.

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