

# **The personhood of the Holy Spirit**

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**Readings: Matthew 28:19**

**Acts 5:1-4; 13:1-4**

**John 14:16-17 & 26 Ephesians 4:30**

**2-Corinthians 13:14**

## **Introduction:**

Our beliefs determine our attitudes and actions. If our beliefs about the Person of the Holy Spirit are not in accordance with Scripture then we will not live in accordance with Scriptures. We therefore need to honestly compare the revelation of Scripture with our own beliefs & behavior in respect to the Holy Spirit and ask God to help us make any necessary adjustments.

If we have ignored, disobeyed or grieved the Holy Spirit we may also need to ask for forgiveness. When we align our beliefs with Scripture the Spirit will be Lord and we will come to experience freedom and transformation into the Lord's likeness (2-Cor 3:17-18). It is not primarily a matter of receiving supernatural power but of enjoying a divine companionship—the fellowship of the Holy Spirit.

Let's start with a question: What are the characteristics of personality? For example, what distinguish a person from a robot, animal, mineral or vegetable???

The Holy Spirit is not merely an influence or impersonal power but is actually a divine person. That is why, when we talk about Him, we must refer to Him as “He” and not “it”. Passages such as Matthew 28:19 and 2-Corinthians 13:14 speak of the Father, Son and the Holy Spirit on the same sentence. In this context it would be inconsistent to think of the Father and Son as Persons but the Holy Spirit as an influence. In John's Gospel, although the word “Spirit” is in the neuter gender, Jesus Himself used personal pronouns when He spoke of the Holy Spirit (eg John 14:16-17, 26; 15:26; 16:7-14). The Holy Spirit is not the personification(representative) of an influence, or the sense of fellowship Christians experience when they get together or even spiritual enthusiasm. He is a person in the same way that you & I are persons—only of course much more so. He is an individual with intelligence, knowledge, wisdom, sympathy and so on. He can speak, rejoice, love, whisper and can be hurt in the same way a close friend can be hurt.

The Bible clearly reveals the Holy Spirit to have emotions, thoughts and an individual will to make decisions. Ephesians 4:30 in the Amplified Bible says “Do not grieve the Holy Spirit of God (do not offend, or vex or sadden Him)”.

In a similar way, Acts 5 shows that He can be lied to and Hebrews 10:29 tells us that He can be insulted. We cannot insult or lie to an influence, but the Holy Spirit can be saddened and even insulted by our attitudes and actions.

Romans 8:27 refers to the “mind of the Spirit” while Acts 15:28 records “ It seemed good to the Holy Spirit and to us”. Here we have an indication of the Holy Spirit's ability to think and to make decisions. This is more clearly stated in 1-Corinthians 12:11, where He chooses who will receive His various gifts.

The Holy Spirit is shown to communicate, in passages such as Acts 13 where He not only speaks but also refers to Himself in the first person—“set apart for me Barnabas and Saul for the work to which I have called them. The Holy Spirit is therefore revealed to possess all the qualities of personhood. The Bible speaks of the “fellowship of the Holy Spirit”. We cannot have a relationship with an influence, but as a Person, the Holy Spirit is able to be our friend, companion, confidant and guide.

The Bible also states that the Holy Spirit is part of the Godhead, with the very same attributes as God the Father. In Genesis 1:2 and Job 33:4, we see He has the power to create. Psalm 139:7 declares His omnipresence and Hebrews 9:14 shows Him to be eternal. In 2-Corinthians 3:17-18, He is referred to as “Lord” and Acts 5:1-4 shows that lying to the Holy Spirit is lying to God.

As a matter of fact, His very title “Holy Spirit” proclaims His divinity. Although, we must not cast the members of the Trinity in pre-determined moulds, it can be helpful to see that each one has an individual ministry in the world. Each member of the Godhead has all the qualities and attributes of the others, but there flows through each individual member a specific ministry.

We could say that the Father is Love(1-John 3:1), the Son is Light (John 1:9) and the Spirit is Life (Romans 8:2).

**The Actions and attributes of the Father, Son and the Holy Spirit.**

<b>Divine actions or attributes</b>	<b>Father</b>	<b>Son</b>	<b>Holy Spirit</b>
<b>Eternal</b>	Rom 16:26-27	Rom 1:17	Heb 9:14
<b>Creator</b>	Ps 100:3	Col 1:16	Ps 104:30
<b>Omnipresent</b>	Jer 23:24	Eph 1:23	Ps 139:7
<b>Omniscient</b>	1-Jh 3:20	Jh 21:17	1-Cor 2:10
<b>Wills and Acts</b>	Eph 1:15-18	Matt 8:31	1-Cor 12:10
(Supernaturally)			
<b>Gives Life</b>	Gen 1:11-31	Jh1:3-4; 5:21	Rom 8:10-11
	John 5:21		John 3:8
<b>Strengthen us</b>	Ps 138:7	Phi 4:13	Eph 3:16
<b>Is Light</b>	James 1:17	John 8:12	2-Cor 4:6
<b>Is Love</b>	John 16:27	John 14:21	Rom 5:5