

I Believe in the Holy Spirit, Part 1
Special Topical Lesson
by David Adams – October 26, 2025

I. Introduction

- a. Today and next week, we are going to study the Holy Spirit together.
- b. Most weeks, we say the Apostles' Creed during the Lord's Supper. This ancient baptismal creed contains several "I believe" statements, capturing the core beliefs held by someone who decided to become a Christian.
- c. One of these statements is, "I believe in the Holy Spirit."
- d. Satan wants us to say these things by rote, not grasp the profound truth and blessing that this statement should have on our lives.
- e. **Questions:**
 - i. What does it mean when we say, "I believe in the Holy Spirit"?
 - ii. What did it mean for the disciples who lived in the early church?
 - iii. Are we united as a church here, in this room, on what this means?
 - 1. Our group comes from different backgrounds (ICOC with limited emphasis on the Holy Spirit; Pentecostal (significant emphasis with some abuses)
 - iv. Who is the Holy Spirit?
 - v. What is His role in our lives?
- f. Further, the New Testament has much to say to Christians about the Holy Spirit and *our day-to-day lives*.
 - i. "If anyone thirsts, let him come to Me and drink. He who believes in Me, as the Scripture has said, out of his heart will flow rivers of living water.' But this He spoke concerning the Spirit, whom those who believe in Him would receive, for the Holy Spirit was not yet given, because Jesus was not yet glorified." (**John 7:37-39**)
 - 1. Fulfilled in **Acts 2**.
 - 2. **Question:** What does this mean that "out of our hearts will flow rivers of living water?"
 - a. Not just your thirst will be assuaged (with a little cup of water), but you will be producing rivers of flowing water out of your own heart!

ii. And what do these mean?

1. "Walk in the Spirit" (**Galatians 5:16**)
2. "Be filled with the Spirit" (**Ephesians 5:18**)
3. "Do not quench the Spirit." (**1 Thessalonians 5:19**)
4. "...do not grieve the Holy Spirit of God...." (**Ephesians 4:30**)
5. "... if any fellowship with the Spirit...." (**Philippians 2:1**)
6. "And walking in the fear of the Lord and in the comfort of the Holy Spirit they were multiplied." (**Acts 9:31**)

iii. My goal today and next Sunday is to open your eyes to what the Scriptures teach about the Holy Spirit and get you thinking more deeply about who He is and what it means to our day-to-day lives and for the church when we say together, "I believe in the Holy Spirit."

II. The Holy Spirit is One of the Three Persons of God

- a. "Hear, O Israel, the Lord our God is one Lord. You shall love the Lord your God from your whole heart, from your whole soul, and from your whole power." (**Deuteronomy 6:4**)
- b. Yet, we learn in Scripture that this one God has revealed Himself in three persons: the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit.
- c. We are to love each of those three persons with our whole heart, soul, and power, not just one or two!
- d. Some basics on the trinity. A really big deal, so stick with me for a minute or two.
 - i. Father, Son, and Spirit have the same nature or substance
 1. All divine, not created, eternal, no beginning
 - ii. Each has a unique role and personal attributes
 1. Their role in creation
 2. Their role in salvation
 3. No one can see the Father, but people saw the Son
 4. Father is unbegotten, the Son and Spirit are begotten
 5. The Spirit can fill a person

iii. There is an order

1. The Father is the source, the origin of all

iv. Profound, a mystery, to be sure. But, actually, not that confusing, how there can be one God in three persons. Early Christians came up with examples to help the Christians understand:

1. The sun and its rays.

a. The rays emanate from the sun. The Sun is the Father, the ultimate source from which the rays come (the Son and the Spirit).

b. They are of the same essence, a part of the sun, but are also different from the sun.

2. Fountain on the mountain that feeds a mountain stream

a. Fountain (the Father) is the ultimate source. All water, same essence. But different.

v. What also helps me understand the 3 in 1 is to look at examples in Scripture when all three appear together.

e. Read **Genesis 1:1-5**

i. We read that God, the Father, created the heavens and the earth; the Father is present. (We know it's the Father from **Hebrews 1:2** and **Acts 17**)

ii. We know from **Hebrews 1**, **Colossians 1**, and **John 1** that all things were created through the Son, so the Son is present.

iii. "The Spirit of God was hovering over the face of the water."

iv. We see here the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit all involved in creation, together, each playing their part. A mystery.

v. **Question:** Why are there three persons? **Answer:** I don't know! But there are, this is how God has revealed Himself. Perfect, beautiful, how things are.

f. Read **Matthew 3:13-4:1**

i. Jesus, the Son of God, is being baptized. (Humility)

ii. The Holy Spirit descends as a dove. "Alighting on Him", filling Jesus with its power. (More on this in a minute.)

1. Dove: one early Christian writer makes the point that this was most appropriate: gentleness, gracious.

2. My thoughts: This makes sense, an important aspect of God's nature, even a requirement of being an elder.
 - iii. The Father's voice from heaven: "This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased."
 - iv. God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Spirit all present, all different, all One. Three persons of God.
- g. Read **Revelation 7:13-17**
- i. Context: a great multitude of faithful brothers and sisters who have persevered through great persecution and trial. We see the three persons of God:
 1. *The Lamb (the Son of God)* will purify them in His blood and shepherd them (sacrifice, love, protection)
 2. They will be led by the Son to "*the living fountains of waters*" (Holy Spirit) (generosity)
 3. *God the Father* will wipe away every tear from their eyes. (comfort, kindness)
 - ii. All are God, all with different roles, parts to play, separate persons. Each helps us understand the nature of God.
- h. **Question:** Why is this important for us?
- i. The more we understand the character of God, the better for us.
 1. We can learn much about the nature and character of God by studying and knowing the Holy Spirit, one of the three persons of God. Many of us have come out of churches where the Holy Spirit was not spoken of, neglected, or diminished.
 2. We often make God in the image of our parents. The quicker you figure out the differences, the better! Studying out God, the Holy Spirit can really help: the Comforter, the Helper, Advocate, etc.
 - i. "I believe in the Holy Spirit: the 3 in 1."

III. The Holy Spirit Embodies the Wisdom of God

- a. This passage is a prophecy of Jesus' baptism (the passage we just read), written approximately 750 years before Jesus was born.
- b. Why this passage is important: We, too, are given the gift of God the Holy Spirit at baptism.

- c. **Question:** Who is this that lives inside of us?
- d. Read **Isaiah 11:1-5**. The Spirit of:
 - i. Wisdom
 - ii. Understanding
 - iii. Counsel
 - iv. Might
 - v. Knowledge
 - vi. Godliness
 - vii. Fear of God (shall fill Him)
- e. The Spirit...
 - i. Filled Jesus with these qualities at His baptism: bringing truth, wisdom, and counsel to all men; confounding the Pharisees; miracles, etc.
 - ii. Filled Peter and John, ordinary and unschooled fishermen, who are filled with courage (might) and wisdom. Jewish leaders took note that they had been with Jesus; they had His Spirit.
 - iii. Wants to fill us as well with these qualities!
- f. “The fear of God shall fill Him” - fear of God is an attribute of the Holy Spirit
 - i. “... who, in the days of His flesh, when He had offered up prayers and supplications, with vehement cries and tears to Him who was able to save Him from death, and was heard because of His godly fear, though He was a Son....” (**Hebrews 5:7-8**)
 - ii. **Question:** If a quality of the Holy Spirit is the fear of God (and Jesus Himself feared God), then what can we conclude about the amount of the Holy Spirit residing in a Christian who does not fear God?
 - iii. **Acts 5:1-6**
 - 1. Ananias lies to the Holy Spirit (vs. 3); he lies to God (vs. 4), and his wife goes along with it – and they are stricken dead!
 - 2. Great fear comes upon the church. (A gentle dove not to be trifled with!)
- g. The fruits of the Holy Spirit (**Galatians 5:22-23**) also tell us about the nature and character of God:

- i. Love, joy, peace, long-suffering, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, and self-control.
- ii. **Questions:**
 - 1. Using garden harvesting analogy... If the fruit of the Holy Spirit consists of these things, what does this tell us about the plant, the source of the fruit?
 - 2. **More challenging question:** If a Christian is not filled with gentleness, joy, love (pick the fruit of your choice from this list!), and these are attributes of the Holy Spirit, how much of the Holy Spirit lives inside of that brother or sister?
- iii. Let us be challenged but encouraged. This fruit, these qualities, are available to us through the power of the Holy Spirit! Deeper dive on this next week.
- iv. (Note: While most Bible translators ascribe the good fruit in **Galatians 5:22-23** to the Holy Spirit, a compelling argument is made that the early Christians understood this good fruit to come from the spirit of man that God places in every person, created in His image. This human spirit (as compared to the flesh) longs for the good things of God. See David Bercot's audio lesson *The Difference Between the Spirit and the Soul*, which can be found at www.scrollpublishing.com.)
- h. "I believe in the Holy Spirit: that the Holy Spirit can provide me with the wisdom and nature of God"

IV. The Holy Spirit Gave Us the Holy Scriptures

- a. The Holy Spirit played a starring role in giving us the Scriptures.
- b. Read **2 Peter 1:19-21**
 - i. "Holy men of God spoke as they were moved by the Holy Spirit."
 - ii. Not their own ideas, interpretations, even though they were written by their own will, from their own background, in their own time and space.
- c. Read **John 14:25-26**
 - i. The Holy Spirit helped the apostles remember what Jesus had taught.
 - ii. The Holy Spirit will "teach you all things"
 - 1. The truth handed down complete to the apostles
 - 2. No additional truth

iii. **Questions:**

1. If Jesus, the Son of God, said the Spirit would teach his apostles all things, is there anything new to teach?
2. Would God the Holy Spirit, after He had delivered “all truth” to the apostles, come up with some new ideas for the church?
3. **Do you believe this?**
 - a. If you do, then you have no choice but to reject any “new and enlightened teaching” that came after the apostles' lifetime. This is something you will be punished for by those who do not share this belief.
- iv. Our sole focus is on returning to the one truth that was handed down to the church in the beginning. We reject everything that does not align with that, with patience, gentleness, and by example.
- d. “... the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God...” (**Ephesians 6:17**)
 - i. A sword, not a shield or breastplate. Word of God is an offensive weapon! Part of the armor of God.
 - ii. To destroy strongholds, bring truth to the confused, light to darkness, bring others to repentance, hope, and comfort.
 - iii. Practical application: each of us needs to learn how to use the Spirit’s sword, if we are going to become the victorious church God desires.
- e. “I believe in the Holy Spirit: that the Holy Spirit, by His supernatural power, ensured the integrity of Scripture and delivered all truth to the Apostles.”

V. Conclusion

- a. “I believe in the Holy Spirit”.
- b. The Holy Spirit is one of the three persons of God. The better we understand and love the three persons of God (Father, Son, and Holy Spirit), the greater we can understand and love God.
- c. The Holy Spirit’s qualities are good, and He desires to fill us with these qualities. How much of the Holy Spirit’s nature is in us? Let us take encouragement in the fact that God desires to supply our needs where we lack. More on this next week!
- d. The Holy Spirit gave us the Scripture. This should provide confidence. And the Scripture is a sword of the Spirit! Let’s pull it out, sharpen it, and learn how to use it effectively.