



What is the Holy Spirit?

(Pneumatology)

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The Holy Spirit Summarized

The Holy Spirit is the breath or wind of God. It is God’s controlling influence that interacts with man and the world. Through the Holy Spirit, the “hand of God” is upon us and the Spirit is symbolic of the “finger” of God. In various ways the Holy Spirit manifests the power of God to accomplish the will of God. It is God’s Spirit, given by God that “proceeds from the Father” as a “heavenly gift” that believers should “receive,” be “filled with,” and be “in”. The Holy Spirit is something that can be “put on,” “put in,” and “put within.” It can be transferred from one person to another, is apportioned, and is divisible. The Holy Spirit “falls on” and is “poured out” as believers are “baptized with the Holy Spirit”. Believers are to “drink” and “taste” this “living water”. We are to speak and pray “in the Spirit” as it accomplishes many various works of God in our life. God’s presence is made manifest through the Holy Spirit as is comforts, counsels, and directs us. We must be careful not to rebel against, resist, grieve, quench or blasphemy God’s controlling influence. The Holy Spirit can be personified in that reflects God’s personality and character although it is not literally a person.

By the Holy Spirit, Jesus was miraculously conceived. At his baptism, the Holy Spirit fell and resided on him. God anointed Jesus of with the Holy Spirit and with power and he when around healing all who were oppressed by the devil - for God was with him. Through the Holy Spirit, God raised Jesus from the dead and through the same Spirit we now have hope of the resurrection. The Holy Spirit is the “Spirit of Christ” which we have access to through Christ. Having been exalted to the right hand of the Father, he has received the promise from the Father to pour of the Spirit out upon all flesh, whosoever he wills. We are to receive the Holy Spirit in addition to our repentance and baptism in Jesus name. We are sealed by the promised Holy Spirit for the day of redemption. We must be born again by the Spirit, abide in the Spirit, and bear the fruits of the Spirit. The Holy Spirit is our living water - a well springing up from within our hearts. True worshipers must worship the Father in Spirit and Truth. By this we know that we abide in God and God in us, because he has given us of his Spirit.

The Holy Spirit is the Breath of God

The word for spirit in Hebrew is *ruach* which means breath, wind, spirit. Similarly, the word Holy Spirit in the Greek comes from the combination of words *pneuma hagion* (πνεῦμα ἅγιον), which most literally means, “air in movement – that is sacred”. The Holy Spirit (*Pneuma*) is most literally the breath or wind of God was used to create the universe and that God uses to interact with man. The correlation between the Spirit and God’s breath or wind is illustrated in the following verses:

- Psalms 33:6 | By the word of the LORD the heavens were made, and **by the breath of his mouth** all their host.
(ESV)
- Job 26:13 | **By his wind the heavens were made fair**
(ESV)
- Job 33:4 | **The spirit of God has made me**, and the **breath** of the Almighty give me life.
(ESV)
- Job 32:8 | But it is the Spirit in man, **the breath of the Almighty**, that makes him understand.
(ESV)
- Job 27:3-4 | as long as my **breath is in me, and the spirit of God is in my nostrils**, my lips will not speak falsehood, and my tongue will not utter deceit.
(ESV)
- John 3:8 | The **wind blows** where it wishes, and you hear its sound, but you do not know where it comes from or where it goes. **So it is with everyone who is born of the Spirit.**
(ESV)

Genesis 2:7 (ESV) then **the LORD God** formed the man of dust from the ground and **breathed** into his nostrils the breath of life, and the man became a living creature.

Psalms 104:29-30 (ESV) When you hide your face, they are dismayed; when you take away their **breath**, they die and return to their dust. **When you send forth your Spirit, they are created**, and you renew the face of the ground.

The Holy Spirit is the God’s Controlling Influence

The Greek word for Spirit is *pneuma*. The use of this word in the New Testament and other early Christian writings is described in the foremost Greek-English Lexicon (BDAG) as follows:

- (1) air in movement, blowing, breathing
- (2) that which animates or gives life to the body, breath, (life-) spirit
- (3) a part of human personality, spirit
- (4) an independent noncorporeal being, in contract to a being that can be perceived by the physical senses, spirit
- (5) God’s being as controlling influence, with a focus on association with humans, Spirit

The most descriptive definition of Spirit as it pertains to God’s Holy Spirit is “*God’s being as controlling influence, with a focus on association with humans*”. That is, it is the extension of God’s being, transmitted from God, that interacts with people. This definition is supported by numerous Scriptural references:

2 Peter 1:21 (ESV) For no prophecy was ever produced by the will of man, but **men spoke from God as they were carried along by the Holy Spirit**

John 3:34 (ESV) For he whom God has sent utters the words of God, **for he gives the Spirit without measure.**”

Exodus 31:3 (ESV) and I have filled him **with the Spirit of God, with ability and intelligence, with knowledge and all craftsmanship**, to devise artistic designs, to work in gold, silver, and bronze, in cutting stones for setting, and in carving wood, to work in every craft.

Numbers 11:25 (ESV) Then the LORD came down in the cloud and spoke to him and **took some of the Spirit** that was on him and **put it on the seventy elders**. And as soon as **the Spirit rested on them, they prophesied**

1 Samuel 10:6 (ESV) Then the **Spirit of the LORD will rush upon you, and you will prophesy** with them and be turned into another man. Now when these signs meet you, do what your hand finds to do, **for God is with you**

Nehemiah 9:29-30 (ESV) Many years you bore with them and **warned them by your Spirit through your prophets**. Yet they would not give ear...

Isaiah 59:21 (ESV) “And as for me, this is my covenant with them,” says the LORD: “**My Spirit that is upon you, and my words that I have put in your mouth**, shall not depart out of your mouth...”

Acts 10:38 (ESV) how **God anointed Jesus of Nazareth with the Holy Spirit and with power**. He went about doing good and healing all who were oppressed by the devil, **for God was with him**.

The Holy Spirit is Symbolic of the “Hand” or “Finger” of God

The “Spirit of God” is analogous to the “hand” or “finger” of God. Just as a man’s hand and finger are subordinate to the will of a man, so the Spirit of God is subject to the will of God. A person is doing what is done by their own hands. Likewise, it is God Himself that is doing the work that is done by the extension of his hand and fingers. Through the Holy Spirit, God’s will is put into action, performing that what he sends it to perform.

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| Ezekiel 1:3
(ESV) | the word of the LORD came to Ezekiel the priest, the son of Buzi, in the land of the Chaldeans by the Chebar canal, and the hand of the LORD was upon him there |
| Ezekiel 3:14
(ESV) | The Spirit lifted me up and took me away, and I went in bitterness in the heat of my spirit, the hand of the LORD being strong upon me. |
| Ezekiel 37:1
(ESV) | The hand of the LORD was upon me, and he brought me out in the Spirit of the LORD and set me down in the middle of the valley; it was full of bones. |
| Exodus 9:3
(ESV) | behold, the hand of the LORD will fall with a very severe plague upon your livestock that are in the field, the horses, the donkeys, the camels, the herds, and the flocks |
| 2 Kings 3:15-16
(ESV) | But now bring me a musician.” And when the musician played, the hand of the LORD came upon him. And he said, “ Thus says the LORD, ‘I will make this dry streambed full of pools.’” |
| 1 Samuel 5:9
(ESV) | But after they had brought it around, the hand of the LORD was against the city, causing a very great panic, and he afflicted the men of the city, both young and old, so that tumors broke out on them. |
| Matthew 12:28
(ESV) | “But if it is by the Spirit of God that I cast out demons, then the kingdom of God has come upon you” |
| Luke 11:20
(ESV) | “But if it is by the finger of God that I cast out demons, then the kingdom of God has come upon you.” |

The Holy Spirit Manifests the Power of God

The terms power and spirit are often used interchangeably since God performs his mighty works through his Spirit and by his power. It is not quite accurate to say Holy Spirit is the power of God, but rather people receive power when the Holy Spirit comes upon them. The power of God, as demonstrated by miraculous works in people, is generally realized through a process that first involves infilling of Holy Spirit and then the subsequent the work of power or divine inspiration. Several some examples are as follows:

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| Judges 14:5-6
(ESV) | Then Samson went down with his father and mother to Timnah, and they came to the vineyards of Timnah. And behold, a young lion came toward him roaring. Then the Spirit of the LORD rushed upon him, and although he had nothing in his hand, he tore the lion in pieces as one tears a young goat... |
| Judges 15:14
(ESV) | When he came to Lehi, the Philistines came shouting to meet him. Then the Spirit of the LORD rushed upon him, and the ropes that were on his arms became as flax that has caught fire, and his bonds melted off his hands. |

- Luke 1:35 (ESV) | 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.
- Acts 1:8 (ESV) | “But you will receive **power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you**, and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the end of the earth.”
- Acts 2:4 (ESV) | And they were all filled with the **Holy Spirit and began to speak in other tongues as the Spirit gave them utterance.**
- Acts 4:31 (ESV) | And when they had prayed, the place in which they were gathered together was shaken, and they were all **filled with the Holy Spirit and continued to speak the word of God with boldness.**
- Acts 10:38 (ESV) | how **God anointed Jesus of Nazareth with the Holy Spirit and with power.** He went about doing good and healing all who were oppressed by the devil, for God was with him.
- Romans 15:19 (ESV) | **by the power of signs and wonders, by the power of the Spirit of God—**so that from Jerusalem and all the way around to Illyricum I have fulfilled the ministry of the gospel of Christ

Thus, Holy Spirit is likened to controlling influence of God through we can interact with the power and mind of God. The power of God is derived from the Holy Spirit as suggested by Jude 1:20 (ESV): “But you, beloved, building yourselves up in your most holy faith and **praying in the Holy Spirit**”. Accordingly Praying in the Holy Spirit is the means by which we interact with God to receive his anointing and empowerment - *God’s controlling influence*.

The Holy Spirit is God’s Spirit Given to People, which proceeds from the Father

‘Numerous scriptural witnesses make it clear that Holy Spirit, is a gift from God that proceeds from the Father. There is a distinction to be made between the “Giver” God and the “Gift” that comes from God, the Holy Spirit - God’s controlling influence.

- 1 Thessalonians 4:8 (ESV) | Therefore whoever disregards this, disregards not man but **God, who gives his Holy Spirit to you.**
- John 15:26 (ESV) | “But when the Helper comes, whom I will send to you from the Father, the Spirit of truth, which **proceeds from the Father...**
- Acts 2:33 (ESV) | “Being therefore exalted at the right hand of God, and **having received from the Father the promise of the Holy Spirit**, he has poured out this that you yourselves are seeing and hearing.”
- Acts 5:32 (ESV) | “And we are witnesses to these things, and so is the Holy Spirit, **whom God has given** to those who obey him.”
- Acts 15:8 (ESV) | And **God**, who knows the heart, bore witness to them, by **giving them the Holy Spirit just as he did to us**,
- Acts 10:38 (ESV) | how **God anointed Jesus of Nazareth with the Holy Spirit** and with power. He went about doing good and healing all who were oppressed by the devil, for God was with him.
- Hebrews 2:4 (ESV) | while **God** also bore witness by signs and wonders and various miracles and **by gifts of the Holy Spirit distributed according to his will.**

- Hebrews 6:4-6 (ESV) For it is impossible, in the case of those who have once been enlightened, who **have tasted the heavenly gift, and have shared in the Holy Spirit**, and **have tasted the goodness of the word of God** and the powers of the age to come, and then have fallen away, to restore them again to repentance, since they are crucifying once again the Son of God to their own harm and holding him up to contempt.
- 1 John 3:24 (ESV) Whoever keeps his commandments abides in God, and God in him. And by this we know that he abides in us, by the **Spirit whom he has given us**.
- 1 John 4:13 (ESV) No one has ever seen God; if we love one another, **God** abides in us and his love is perfected in us. By this we know that we abide in him and he in us, **because he has given us of his Spirit**.

The Holy Spirit is Something to be “Received” (as a Gift)

Several Scriptural references attest to Holy Spirit as being something to be received.

- Acts 1:4-5 (ESV) And while staying with them he ordered them not to depart from Jerusalem, but to wait for the **promise** of the Father, which, he said, “you heard from me; for John baptized with water, **but you will be baptized with the Holy Spirit not many days from now.**”
- Acts 2:38 (ESV) And Peter said to them, “Repent and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of your sins, and you will **receive the gift of the Holy Spirit**.”
- Acts 8:14-19 (ESV) Now when the apostles at Jerusalem heard that Samaria had received the word of God, they sent to them Peter and John, who came down and prayed for them that they might **receive the Holy Spirit**, for he had not yet fallen on any of them, but they had only been baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus. Then they laid their hands on them and they **received the Holy Spirit**. Now when Simon saw that the **Spirit was given** through the laying on of the apostles’ hands, he offered them money, saying, “Give me this power also, so that anyone on whom I lay my hands may **receive the Holy Spirit.**”
- John 20:22 (ESV) And when he had said this, he breathed on them and said to them, “**Receive the Holy Spirit.**”
- Ephesians 1:13 (ESV) In him you also, when you heard the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation, and believed in him, were sealed with the **promised Holy Spirit**,
- Hebrews 6:4 (ESV) For it is impossible, in the case of those who have once been enlightened, who have tasted the **heavenly gift, and have shared in the Holy Spirit**

The Holy Spirit is Something to Be “Filled With”

Several Scriptural references attest to Holy Spirit as being something to be “Filled With”.

- Luke 1:15 (ESV) for he will be great before the Lord. And he must not drink wine or strong drink, and he will be **filled with the Holy Spirit**, even from his mother’s womb.
- Luke 1:41 (ESV) And when Elizabeth heard the greeting of Mary, the baby leaped in her womb. And Elizabeth was **filled with the Holy Spirit**,
- Luke 1:67 (ESV) And his father Zechariah was **filled with the Holy Spirit** and prophesied, saying.”

- Acts 4:8 (ESV) | Then Peter, **filled with the Holy Spirit**, said to them, “Rulers of the people and elders
- Acts 4:31 (ESV) | And when they had prayed, the place in which they were gathered together was shaken, and they were all **filled with the Holy Spirit** and continued to speak the word of God with boldness.
- Acts 7:55 (ESV) | But he, **full of the Holy Spirit**, gazed into heaven and saw the glory of God, and Jesus standing at the right hand of God.
- Acts 9:17 (ESV) | So Ananias departed and entered the house. And laying his hands on him he said, “Brother Saul, the Lord Jesus who appeared to you on the road by which you came has sent me so that you may regain your sight and **be filled with the Holy Spirit.**”
- Acts 11:24 (ESV) | for he was a good man, **full of the Holy Spirit** and of faith. And a great many people were added to the Lord.
- Ephesians 5:18 (ESV) | And do not get drunk with wine, for that is debauchery, **but be filled with the Spirit**

The Holy Spirit is Something to be “In”

We be “in” the spirit when operating in power, speaking under divine inspiration, and in prayer. Rather than being “someone” we pray to or worship, the Holy spirit is “something” we pray and operate “in”. There are no references that the Holy Spirit is someone that should be prayed or worshiped. Rather the Holy Spirit is something we should operate “in”. True worshippers shall worship the Father “in” Spirit and truth.

- Mark 12:36 (ESV) | David himself, **in the Holy Spirit**, declared, ‘The Lord said to my Lord, “Sit at my right hand, until I put your enemies under your feet.”’
- Romans 9:1 (ESV) | I am speaking the truth in Christ—I am not lying; my conscience bears me witness **in the Holy Spirit**,
- 1 Corinthians 12:3 (ESV) | Therefore I want you to understand that no one speaking **in the Spirit of God** ever says “Jesus is accursed!” and no one can say “Jesus is Lord” except **in the Holy Spirit**
- 1 Thessalonians 1:5 (ESV) | because our gospel came to you not only in word, but also in power and **in the Holy Spirit** and with full conviction. You know what kind of men we proved to be among you for your sake
- Ephesians 6:18 (ESV) | praying at all times **in the Spirit**, with all prayer and supplication. To that end, keep alert with all perseverance, making supplication for all the saints
- John 4:23 (ESV) | But the hour is coming, and is now here, when the true worshipers will worship the Father **in spirit** and truth, for the Father is seeking such people to worship him.
- Romans 15:30 (ESV) | 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.

The Holy Spirit Is Transferrable, is Apportioned and Divisible

Several Bible references attest to the Spirit being likened to a substance that is transferrable, can be apportioned, and is divisible. Peter on the day of Pentecost, reads “saith God: of my Spirit I will pour out” (Acts

2:17, Tyndale) and 1 John 4:13 indicates that God has “given us of his Spirit”. Understood literally, the Greek means, “some of” or “part of” – indicating a share or portion. Accordingly, we understand that the Spirit of God is something that can be distributed among many.

- Numbers 11:17
(ESV)

And I will come down and talk with you there. And I will **take some of the Spirit that is on you and put it on them**, and they shall bear the burden of the people with you, so that you may not bear it yourself alone.
- Numbers 11:25
(ESV)

Then the LORD came down in the cloud and spoke to him, and took **some of the Spirit that was on him and put it on the seventy elders**. And as soon as the Spirit rested on them, they prophesied...
- 2 Kings 2:9-10
(ESV)

When they had crossed, Elijah said to Elisha, “Ask what I shall do for you, before I am taken from you.” And Elisha said, “Please let there be a **double portion of your spirit** on me”
- 2 Kings 2:15-16
(ESV)

Now when the sons of the prophets who were at Jericho saw him opposite them, they said, “**The spirit of Elijah rests on Elisha.**” And they came to meet him and bowed to the ground before him. And they said to him, “Behold now, there are with your servants fifty strong men. Please let them go and seek your master. It may be that the **Spirit of the LORD** has caught him up and cast him upon some mountain or into some valley”
- Acts 2:1-4
(ESV)

When the day of Pentecost arrived, they were all together in one place. And suddenly there came from heaven a sound like a mighty rushing wind, and it filled the entire house where they were sitting. And **divided tongues as of fire appeared to them and rested on each one of them. And they were all filled with the Holy Spirit** and began to speak in other tongues as the Spirit gave them utterance.
- Acts 2:17
(Tyndale)

It shall be in the last days, saith God: **of** my Spirit I **pour out** on all people. Your sons and daughters will prophesy, your young men will see visions, your old men will dream dreams.
- Acts 2:17
(KJV)

And it shall come to pass in the last days, saith God, I will **pour out of** my Spirit upon all flesh: and your sons and your daughters shall prophesy, and your young men shall see visions, and your old men shall dream dreams
- Acts 2:17
(ASV)

And it shall be in the last days, saith God, I will **pour forth of** My Spirit upon all flesh: And your sons and your daughters shall prophesy, And your young men shall see visions, And your old men shall dream dreams:
- Acts 2:17
(NASB)

'AND IT SHALL BE IN THE LAST DAYS,' God says, 'THAT I WILL **POUR FORTH OF MY SPIRIT ON ALL MANKIND; AND YOUR SONS AND YOUR DAUGHTERS SHALL PROPHECY, AND YOUR YOUNG MEN SHALL SEE VISIONS, AND YOUR OLD MEN SHALL DREAM DREAMS;**
- 1 John 4:13
(ESV)

No one has ever seen God; if we love one another, God abides in us and his love is perfected in us. By this we know that we abide in him and he in us, because he has given us **of** his Spirit.
- Hebrews 2:4
(ESV)

while God also bore witness by signs and wonders and various miracles and by gifts of the **Holy Spirit distributed** according to his will.

The Holy Spirit is Something that is “Put on” or “Put Within”, “Falls Upon”, or is “Poured Out”

Many scriptural references demonstrate that the Holy Spirit to something that can be “put on”, can “fall upon”, and can be “poured out”. Some Scriptural references describe the Holy Spirit to something that can be “put on,” “put within,” or “put upon.”

Numbers 11:25 (ESV) Then the LORD came down in the cloud and spoke to him, and took some of the Spirit that was on him and **put it on the seventy elders**. And as soon as the **Spirit rested on them**, they prophesied. But they did not continue doing it.

Numbers 11:27-29 (ESV) And a young man ran and told Moses, “Eldad and Medad are prophesying in the camp.” And Joshua the son of Nun, the assistant of Moses from his youth, said, “My lord Moses, stop them.” But Moses said to him, “Are you jealous for my sake? Would that all the LORD’S people were prophets, that the LORD would **put his Spirit on them!**”

Isaiah 42:1 (ESV) Behold my servant, whom I uphold, my chosen, in whom my soul delights; I have **put my Spirit upon** him; he will bring forth justice to the nations

Ezekiel 36:27 (ESV) And I will **put my Spirit within you**, and cause you to walk in my statutes and be careful to obey my rules

Several Scriptural references liken the Holy Spirit to something that “falls on” or “descends upon” and “remains”.

Luke 3:21-22 (ESV) Now when all the people were baptized, and when Jesus also had been baptized and was praying, the heavens were opened, and the **Holy Spirit descended on him in bodily form, like a dove**; and a voice came from heaven, “You are my beloved Son; with you I am well pleased.”

Luke 4:18 (ESV) “**The Spirit of the Lord is upon me**, because he has **anointed** me to proclaim good news to the poor. He has sent me to proclaim liberty to the captives and recovering of sight to the blind, to set at liberty those who are oppressed

John 1:33 (ESV) I myself did not know him, but he who sent me to baptize with water said to me, ‘He on whom you see the Spirit **descend and remain**, this is he who baptizes with the Holy Spirit.’

Acts 2:1-4 (ESV) When the day of Pentecost arrived, they were all together in one place. And suddenly there **came from heaven** a sound like a mighty rushing wind, and it filled the entire house where they were sitting. And divided tongues as of fire appeared to them and rested on each one of them. And they were all filled with the Holy Spirit and began to speak in other tongues as the Spirit gave them utterance.

Acts 10:38 (ESV) how **God anointed Jesus of Nazareth with the Holy Spirit and with power**. He went about doing good and healing all who were oppressed by the devil, for God was with him.

Acts 10:44 (ESV) While Peter was still saying these things, the **Holy Spirit fell on all** who heard the word. And the believers from among the circumcised who had come with Peter were amazed, because the gift of the Holy Spirit was poured out even on the Gentiles.

Acts 11:15 (ESV) As I began to speak, the Holy Spirit **fell on them** just as on us at the beginning. And I remembered the word of the Lord, how he said, ‘John baptized with water, but you will **be baptized with the Holy Spirit.**’

Several Scriptural references describe the Holy Spirit to something that *is* “poured out”.

Isaiah 32:15 (ESV) until the Spirit **is poured upon** us from on high, and the wilderness becomes a fruitful field, and the fruitful field is deemed a forest.

Isaiah 44:3 (ESV) For I will pour water on the thirsty land, and streams on the dry ground; I will **pour my Spirit** upon your offspring, and my blessing on your descendants.

Ezekiel 39:29 (ESV) And I will not hide my face anymore from them, when I **pour out my Spirit** upon the house of Israel, declares the Lord GOD.”

Joel 2:28-29 (ESV) “And it shall come to pass afterward, that I will **pour out my Spirit on all flesh**; your sons and your daughters shall prophesy, your old men shall dream dreams, and your young men shall see visions. Even on the male and female servants in those days I **will pour out my Spirit.**

Acts 2:17 (Tyndale) It shall be in the last days, saith God: **of my Spirit I pour out** on all people. Your sons and daughters will prophesy, your young men will see visions, your old men will dream dreams.

Acts 10:38 (ESV) how **God anointed Jesus of Nazareth with the Holy Spirit and with power.** He went about doing good and healing all who were oppressed by the devil, for God was with him.

Acts 10:44 (ESV) While Peter was still saying these things, the Holy Spirit fell on all who heard the word. And the believers from among the circumcised who had come with Peter were amazed, because the gift of the **Holy Spirit was poured out** even on the Gentile.

The Holy Spirit is “Baptized With” and is “Living Water” that We Can “Drink”

The word *baptize* means to dip or immerse. There are numerous Scriptural references indicating Holy Spirit is something believers can be baptized, in contrast to water baptism. Receiving the Spirit is analogous to being born again. Receiving the Spirit is analogous to being born again. In contrast to ordinary water, the Spirit is living water that we can partake of and drink. This spirit is to flow out of our heart as rivers of living water:

Luke 3:16 (ESV) John answered them all, saying, “I baptize you with water, but he who is mightier than I is coming, the strap of whose sandals I am not worthy to untie. He will **baptize you with the Holy Spirit** and fire.

Acts 1:5 (ESV) for John baptized with water, but you will be **baptized with the Holy Spirit** not many days from now.”

Acts 2:38 (ESV) And Peter said to them, “Repent and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of your sins, and **you will receive** the gift of **the Holy Spirit.**

Acts 11:15-16 (ESV) As I began to speak, the Holy Spirit **fell on them just as on us** at the beginning. And I remembered the word of the Lord, how he said, ‘John baptized with water, but you will be **baptized with the Holy Spirit.**’

- John 1:33 (ESV) | I myself did not know him, but he who sent me to baptize with water said to me, ‘**He on whom you see the Spirit descend and remain, this is he who baptizes with the Holy Spirit.**’
- John 3:5-8 (ESV) | Jesus answered, “Truly, truly, I say to you, **unless one is born of water and the Spirit, he cannot enter 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 marvel that I said to you, ‘You must be born again.’ The wind blows where it wishes, and you hear its sound, but you do not know where it comes from or where it goes. So it is with everyone who is **born of the Spirit.**”
- John 4:10 (ESV) | Jesus answered her, “If you knew **the gift of God**, and who it is that is saying to you, ‘Give me a drink,’ you would have asked him, and he would have given **you living water.**”
- John 7:37-39 (ESV) | On the last day of the feast, the great day, Jesus stood up and cried out, “If anyone thirsts, let him come to me and **drink.** Whoever believes in me, as the Scripture has said, Out of his heart **will flow rivers of living water.**” **Now this he said about the Spirit**, whom those who believed in him were to receive, for **as yet the Spirit had not been given**, because Jesus was not yet glorified.
- 1 Corinthians 12:13 (ESV) | For in one **Spirit we were all baptized into one body**—Jews or Greeks, slaves or free—and all were made **to drink of one Spirit.**
- Ephesians 5:18 (ESV) | And do not get drunk with wine, for that is debauchery, but be filled with the Spirit,

The Holy Spirit Accomplishes Many Works of God

The Holy Spirit is referred to as the “Spirit of truth (John 14:17) and in various ways represents the influence or power under which a person is affected. The “spirit of the world” can be contrasted with the “spirit which is of God” (1 Corinthians 2:12). These competing influences are at work in the world. Each is an influence emanating from a source that produces various attitudes, behaviors, or “fruit”. The Holy Spirit directs people toward God’s will being his “breath,” “wind,” “hand,” or “finger”. The many works accomplished through God’s controlling influence are described in these Scriptural references:

- Luke 2:26 (ESV) | And it had been **revealed to him by the Holy Spirit** that he would not see death before he had seen the Lord’s Christ.
- Luke 4:1 (ESV) | And Jesus, full of the Holy Spirit, returned from the Jordan and was **led by the Spirit** in the wilderness.
- Acts 9:31 (ESV) | So the church throughout all Judea and Galilee and Samaria had peace and was being built up. And walking in the fear of the Lord and in the **comfort of the Holy Spirit**, it multiplied.
- Acts 10:38 (ESV) | how God anointed Jesus of Nazareth with the Holy Spirit and with power. He went about doing good and **healing all who were oppressed by the devil**, for God was with him.
- 1 Thessalonians 1:6 (ESV) | And you became imitators of us and of the Lord, for you received the word in much affliction, with the **joy of the Holy Spirit**

- 1 Corinthians 2:9-13 (ESV) | But, as it is written, “What no eye has seen, nor ear heard, nor the heart of man imagined, what God has prepared for those who love him”— **these things God has revealed to us through the Spirit. For the Spirit searches everything**, even the depths of God. For who knows a person's thoughts except the spirit of that person, which is in him? So also no one comprehends the thoughts of God except the Spirit of God. Now we have received not the spirit of the world, but the Spirit who is from God, that we might understand the things freely given us by God. And we impart this in words not taught by human wisdom but **taught by the Spirit**, interpreting spiritual truths to those who are spiritual.
- 2 Corinthians 1:21-22 (ESV) | And it is God who establishes us with you in Christ, and has anointed us, and who has also put his seal on us and given us **his Spirit in our hearts as a guarantee**.
- 1 Corinthians 14:1 (ESV) | Pursue love, and earnestly desire the **spiritual gifts, especially that you may prophesy**.
- Romans 8:13-14 (ESV) | For if you live according to the flesh you will die, but if by the Spirit you put to death the deeds of the body, you will live. **For all who are led by the Spirit of God** are sons of God.
- Romans 8:27 (ESV) | And he who searches hearts knows what is the mind of the Spirit, because the Spirit intercedes for the saints according to the will of God.
- Romans 14:17 (ESV) | For the kingdom of God is not a matter of eating and drinking but of **righteousness and peace and joy in the Holy Spirit**.
- Romans 15:16 (ESV) | to be a minister of Christ Jesus to the Gentiles in the priestly service of the gospel of God, so that the offering of the Gentiles may be acceptable, **sanctified by the Holy Spirit**.
- Romans 15:19 (ESV) | by the **power of signs and wonders, by the power of the Spirit of God**—so that from Jerusalem and all the way around to Illyricum I have fulfilled the ministry of the gospel of Christ
- Galatians 5:5 (ESV) | For **through the Spirit**, by faith, we ourselves eagerly wait for the hope of righteousness.
- Galatians 5:22-25 (ESV) | But the **fruit of the Spirit** is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, self-control; against such things there is no law. And those who belong to Christ Jesus have crucified the flesh with its passions and desires. If we live by the Spirit, let us also keep in step with the Spirit.
- Ephesians 2:18-22 (ESV) | For through him we both have access **in one Spirit to the Father**. So then you are no longer strangers and aliens, but you are fellow citizens with the saints and members of the household of God, built on the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Christ Jesus himself being the cornerstone, in whom the whole structure, being joined together, grows into a holy temple in the Lord. In him **you also are being built together into a dwelling place for God by the Spirit**.
- 1 Peter 1:2 (ESV) | according to the foreknowledge of God the Father, in the **sanctification of the Spirit**, for obedience to Jesus Christ and for sprinkling with his blood: May grace and peace be multiplied to you.
- Titus 3:5 (ESV) | he saved us, not because of works done by us in righteousness, but according to his own mercy, **by the washing of regeneration and renewal of the Holy Spirit**

John 3:5-8 (ESV) | Jesus answered, “Truly, truly, I say to you, **unless one is born of water and the Spirit, he cannot enter 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 marvel that I said to you, ‘You must be born again.’ The wind blows where it wishes, and you hear its sound, but you do not know where it comes from or where it goes. So it is with everyone who is **born of the Spirit.**”

The Holy Spirit Can be Rebelled Against, Resisted, Lied To, Grieved, Quenched and Blasphemed Against

When someone is rebelling against or despising God’s controlling influence, which is associated with God’s presence, that person can be said to be grieving, resisting, or quenching his Spirit:

Isaiah 63:10 (ESV) | But **they rebelled and grieved his Holy Spirit;** therefore he turned to be their enemy, and himself fought against them.

Acts 5:3 (ESV) | But Peter said, “Ananias, why has Satan filled your heart to **lie to the Holy Spirit** and to keep back for yourself part of the proceeds of the land?

Acts 7:51 (ESV) | “You stiff-necked people, uncircumcised in heart and ears, you **always resist the Holy Spirit.** As your fathers did, so do you.

Ephesians 4:30 (ESV) | And do not **grieve the Holy Spirit of God,** by whom you were sealed for the day of redemption.

1 Thessalonians 5:19 (ESV) | **Do not quench the Spirit**

Psalms 51:11 (ESV) | **Cast me not away from your presence and take not your Holy Spirit from me.**

Luke 12:10-12 (ESV) | And everyone who speaks a word against the Son of Man will be forgiven, but **the one who blasphemes against the Holy Spirit will not be forgiven.** And when they bring you before the synagogues and the rulers and the authorities, do not be anxious about how you should defend yourself or what you should say, for the Holy Spirit will teach you in that very hour what you ought to say.”

The Holy Spirit Makes God Personal but Is Not Literally a Person

The numerous scriptural witnesses in the sections above attest that the Holy Spirit is a Gift that originates from God, and that it is something that someone can receive, be filled with, be in, put on, and be baptized with and that it is something that is transferrable and can be apportioned. This all indicates the Holy Spirit is *God’s Controlling influence* rather than a personal being associated with God. Although the Holy Spirit makes God personal, it reflects the Father’s character, and it accomplishes the will of God, the Holy Spirit itself is not a personal being. To summarize, many scriptural references attest to the Holy Spirit being something rather than someone. The following is a table of the various language used in scripture relating to the Holy Spirit that disqualifies the idea that the Spirit of God is literally a person that is also distinguishable from the Father.

Scriptural Evidence	Something	Someone
The Holy Spirit is “Breath” or “Wind” of God	Yes	No
The Holy Spirit is the “hand” or “finger” of God	Yes	No
The Holy Spirit is of God - “His Spirit,” “given by God,” that “proceeds from the Father”	Yes	No
The Holy Spirit is empowerment that someone can “receive”	Yes	No
The Holy Spirit is a “heavenly gift” that can be “tasted”	Yes	No
The Holy Spirit is transferable, apportioned, and divisible	Yes	No
The Holy Spirit is “put on,” “put upon,” or “put within”	Yes	No
The Holy Spirit “falls upon” and “remains upon” the “anointed”	Yes	No
The Holy Spirit is “poured out”	Yes	No
Someone can be “in” the Holy Spirit	Yes	No
Someone can be “filled with” the Holy Spirit	Yes	No
Someone can be “baptized with” the Holy Spirit	Yes	No
Someone can “drink” – “living water” which is the Holy Spirit	Yes	No
Someone can “quench” the Holy Spirit	Yes	No

The Greek word for “spirit” (*pneuma*) is neuter indicating it as an impersonal abstract noun. Other nouns referring to the functions of the Holy Spirit are sometimes in the masculine gender. Greek, like many other languages including Spanish, French, German, Latin, and Hebrew assigns a gender to nouns although they do not refer to a living being. A Greek grammar rule is that the gender of any associated pronouns must match the noun. For example, a lamp would be considered a “he” in the Greek although a lamp is obviously not living being or person. The gendering of nouns and pronouns often leads to some confusion with respect translating passages related to the Holy Spirit, especially with respect to the function of the Holy Spirit as an “Intervention” (*parakletos*) which is often translated as “Helper,” “Comforter,” “Counselor,” or “Intercessor.”

New Testament translators, carrying a Trinitarian bias, generally use masculine pronouns such as “he,” “him,” “who,” or “whom” that should be translated as “it,” “its,” “itself,” and “which” for pronouns that are in reference to the Holy Spirit. Translated correctly, the case for identifying the Holy Spirit as a distinct person from the Father would largely disappear from Christian belief. The understanding of foundational Christian theology cannot depend on a few pronouns, but rather should be founded upon the balance of Scripture and the weight of the biblical evidence presented in the above sections.

The following verses are the primary examples of the misuse of gender pronouns. If the appropriate impersonal pronouns are used and related nouns are not translated with a bias toward identifying the Holy Spirit as a person, the alternative translation achieves a high level of comprehensibility while retaining the meaning that should be ascribed to “Holy Spirit”.

John 14:16-17

<p>ESV, (Biased Translation)</p> <p>And I will ask the Father, and he will give you another Helper, to be with you forever, even the Spirit of truth, whom the world cannot receive, because it neither sees him nor knows him. You know him, for he dwells with you and will be in you.</p>	<p>Alternative Translation</p> <p>And I will ask the Father, and he will give you a special Intervention, to be with you forever, even the Spirit of truth, which the world cannot receive, because it neither sees it nor knows it. You know it, for it dwells with you and will be in you.</p>
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John 14:26

<p>ESV, (Biased Translation) 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 have said to you.</p>	<p>Alternative Translation But the Intervention, the Holy Spirit, which the Father will send in my name, it will teach you all things and bring to your remembrance all that I have said to you.</p>
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John 15:26

<p>ESV, (Biased Translation) 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.</p>	<p>Alternative Translation But when the Intervention comes, which I will send to you from the Father, the Spirit of truth, which proceeds from the Father, it will bear witness about me.</p>
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John 16:7-8

<p>ESV, (Biased Translation) Nevertheless, 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. And when he comes, he will convict the world concerning sin and righteousness and judgment</p>	<p>Alternative Translation Nevertheless, I tell you the truth: it is to your advantage that I go away, for if I do not go away, the Intervention will not come to you. But if I go, I will send it to you. And when it comes, it will convict the world concerning sin and righteousness and judgment</p>
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John 16:13

<p>ESV, (Biased Translation) When the Spirit of truth comes, he will guide you into all the truth, for he will not speak on his own authority, but whatever he hears he will speak, and he will declare to you the things that are to come.</p>	<p>Alternative Translation When the Spirit of truth comes, it will guide you into all the truth, for it will not transmit on its own authority, but whatever it receives it will transmit, and it will impart to you the things that are to come</p>
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Romans 8:26-27

<p>ESV, (Biased Translation) Likewise the Spirit helps us in our weakness. For we do not know what to pray for as we ought, but the Spirit himself intercedes for us with groanings too deep for words. And he who searches hearts knows what is the mind of the Spirit, because the Spirit intercedes for the saints according to the will of God.</p>	<p>Alternative Translation Likewise the Spirit helps us in our weakness. For we do not know what to pray for as we ought, but itself - the Spirit- it intervenes with groanings too deep for words. But what searches the hearts knows the disposition of the Spirit, because the Spirit intervenes for the saints according to the will of God.</p>
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Ephesians 1:13-14

<p>ESV, (Biased Translation) In him you also, when you heard the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation, and believed in him, were sealed with the promised Holy Spirit, who is the guarantee of our inheritance until we acquire possession of it, to the praise of his glory.</p>	<p>Alternative Translation In him you also, when you heard the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation, and believed in him, were sealed with the promised Holy Spirit, which is the guarantee of our inheritance until we acquire possession of it, to the praise of his glory.</p>
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Again, the rendering of pronouns personal “he” rather than impersonal “it” is an editorial decision based on Trinitarian dogma. However, the Holy Spirit is better understood as something that believers receive. Considering that the Holy Spirit is *God’s controlling influence*, it not only reflects the mind and character of God but is an extension of God’s presence that comforts us and gives revelation and “speaks” to us. A clue that it is the Spirit doesn’t speak from itself, is in John 16:12 which says “When the Spirit of truth comes, ...it will not speak on its own authority, but whatever it hears it will speak.” Although poetic personification might be employed in reference to the Comforter/Helper, this is a figurative expression. The Holy Spirit can be personified in that it represents God’s nature and character - not because Holy Spirit itself is literally a person. Through God’s *controlling influence*, the Holy Spirit gives commands, forbids, indicates, says, or otherwise directs man.

- Acts 1:2 (ESV) | until the day when he was taken up, after he had given **commands through the Holy Spirit** to the apostles whom he had chosen.
- Acts 16:6 (ESV) | And they went through the region of Phrygia and Galatia, having been **forbidden by the Holy Spirit** to speak the word in Asia.
- Acts 20:28 (ESV) | Pay careful attention to yourselves and to all the flock, in which **the Holy Spirit has made you** overseers, to care for the church of God...
- Acts 28:25 (ESV) | And disagreeing among themselves, they departed after Paul had made one statement: “**The Holy Spirit was right in saying** to your fathers through Isaiah the prophet
- Hebrews 3:7-8 (ESV) | Therefore, **as the Holy Spirit says**, “Today, if you hear his voice, do not harden your hearts as in the rebellion, on the day of testing in the wilderness
- Hebrews 9:8 (ESV) | By this **the Holy Spirit indicates** that the way into the holy places is not yet opened as long as the first section is still standing
- Hebrews 10:15 (ESV) | And the **Holy Spirit also bears witness** to us; for after saying
- 1 Peter 1:12 (ESV) | It was revealed to them that they were serving not themselves but you, in the things that have now been **announced** to you through those who preached the good news to you **by the Holy Spirit** sent from heaven, things into which angels long to look

Personification, as a figure of speech, is common in Scripture and is defined as attributing personal qualities such as feelings or actions, to things that are not literally a person. Wisdom is personified as such in Proverbs 8 and 9. The personification of the abstract nouns in Bible translations also relates to the common error in translating and interoperating the prologue of John as it describes to the divine “*Word*” (logos, meaning *what is said including the reasoning*) that was in the beginning with God and through which God made all things that were made (John 1:1-4). It should be clear however that God’s divine attributes, including his Holy Spirit, his Wisdom, and his Word, are not literally persons but qualities that reflect the person of the one God and Father.

John 1: 1-4, The Word (Logos)

<p>ESV, (Biased Translation) In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. He was in the beginning with God. All things were made through him, and without him was not anything made that was made. In him was life, and the life was the light of men.</p>	<p>Improved Translation In beginning was the Word, and the Word was toward the God, and “God” was the Word. The same was in the beginning toward the God. All things were made through it, and without it was not anything made. What was made in it – life was, and the life was the light of men.</p>
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The Holy Spirit is the “Spirit of Christ”

Through His Spirit, the one God and Father was active in the miraculous conception, ministry, and resurrection of Christ Jesus. Jesus has now received from the Father the promise of the Holy Spirit and has poured it out upon all flesh. He is the one who baptizes in the Holy Spirit and with fire. If the Spirit of him who raised Jesus from the Dead dwells in us, he who raised Christ Jesus from the dead will also give life to our mortal bodies through his Spirit who dwells in us. God has sent the Spirit of his Son into our hearts, crying “Abba! Father!”.

- Isaiah 11:1-2 (ESV) | “The Spirit of the LORD shall rest upon him, the Spirit of wisdom and understanding, the Spirit of counsel and might, the Spirit of knowledge and the fear of the LORD.”
- Isaiah 61:1 (ESV) | “The Spirit of the Lord GOD is upon me, because the LORD has anointed me to bring good news to the poor; he has sent me to bind up the brokenhearted, to proclaim liberty to the captives, and the opening of the prison to those who are bound.”
- Luke 1:35 (ESV) | 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.
- Luke 3:16 (ESV) | John answered them all, saying, “I baptize you with water, but he who is mightier than I is coming, the strap of whose sandals I am not worthy to untie. He will baptize you with the Holy Spirit and fire.
- Luke 3:22 (ESV) | and the Holy Spirit descended on him in bodily form, like a dove; and a voice came from heaven, “You are my beloved Son; with you I am well pleased.”
- Luke 4:1 (ESV) | And Jesus, full of the Holy Spirit, returned from the Jordan and was led by the Spirit in the wilderness
- Luke 4:14 (ESV) | And Jesus returned in the power of the Spirit to Galilee, and a report about him went out through all the surrounding country.
- Luke 4:18-19 (ESV) | The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, because he has anointed me to proclaim good news to the poor. He has sent me to proclaim liberty to the captives and recovering of sight to the blind, to set at liberty those who are oppressed, to proclaim the year of the Lord’s favor.”
- Luke 10:21 (ESV) | In that same hour he rejoiced in the Holy Spirit and said, “I thank you, Father, Lord of heaven and earth, that you have hidden these things from the wise and understanding and revealed them to little children; yes, Father, for such was your gracious will.
- Luke 21:15 (ESV) | for I will give you a mouth and wisdom, which none of your adversaries will be able to withstand or contradict.
- John 1:32-34 (ESV) | And John bore witness: “I saw the Spirit descend from heaven like a dove, and it remained on him. I myself did not know him, but he who sent me to baptize with water said to me, ‘He on whom you see the Spirit descend and remain, this is he who baptizes with the Holy Spirit.’ And I have seen and have borne witness that this is the Son of God.”
- John 3:33-36 (ESV) | Whoever receives his testimony sets his seal to this, that God is true. For he whom God has sent utters the words of God, for he gives the Spirit without measure. The Father loves the Son and has given all things into his hand. Whoever believes in the Son has eternal life; whoever does not obey the Son shall not see life, but the wrath of God remains on him.

- John 7:37-39 (ESV) | On the last day of the feast, the great day, Jesus stood up and cried out, “If anyone thirsts, let him come to me and drink. Whoever believes in me, as the Scripture has said, Out of his heart will flow rivers of living water.” Now this he said about the Spirit, whom those who believed in him were to receive, for as yet the Spirit had not been given, because Jesus was not yet glorified.
- John 14:26 (ESV) | 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 have said to you.
- John 15:26 (ESV) | “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.
- Acts 10:38 (ESV) | how God anointed Jesus of Nazareth with the Holy Spirit and with power. He went about doing good and healing all who were oppressed by the devil, for God was with him.
- Acts 2:32-33 (ESV) | This Jesus God raised up, and of that we all are witnesses. Being therefore exalted at the right hand of God, and having received from the Father the promise of the Holy Spirit, he has poured out this that you yourselves are seeing and hearing.
- Philippians 1:19 (ESV) | for I know that through your prayers and the help of the Spirit of Jesus Christ this will turn out for my deliverance
- Romans 8:9 (ESV) | You, however, are not in the flesh but in the Spirit, if in fact the Spirit of God dwells in you. Anyone who does not have the Spirit of Christ does not belong to him.
- Romans 8:11 (ESV) | 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.
- Galatians 4:6 (ESV) | And because you are sons, God has sent the Spirit of his Son into our hearts, crying, “Abba! Father!”

*according to the foreknowledge of God the Father,
in the sanctification of the Spirit,
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with his blood:*

May grace and peace be multiplied to you.

Born Again to a Living Hope.

1 Peter 1:2 (ESV)