

B10 - God the Holy Spirit

Study 1 - The Deity of the Holy Spirit

BIBLE READING:

Psalm 139: 7-12; Hebrews 9: 13-14

KEY VERSE:

“The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ and the love of God and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit be with you all.”

2 Corinthians 13: 14

The Holy Spirit is often referred to as ‘The third Person of the Trinity’. Although the word ‘Trinity’ is not found in the Bible, it is a useful term to convey the idea of ‘Three-in-One’ (‘tri-unity’). Christians believe in ONE God who is expressed in THREE Persons. There is God the Father, God the Son and God the Holy Spirit. (Older Bible versions use the word ‘Holy Ghost’)

In this first Study, we aim to show from the Bible that the Holy Spirit is equal with the Father and the Son. He is no less God than they are. That is why the Study is entitled ‘The Deity of the Holy Spirit’. It means, the Holy Spirit IS God.

Consider these facts:

1. THE HOLY SPIRIT IS ETERNAL.

Hebrews 9: 14 tells us that it was **“through the eternal Spirit”** that Christ offered Himself to God. The use of the word ‘eternal’ shows that He is God, and not just a created being, as each of us is.

2. THE HOLY SPIRIT IS ALL-KNOWING. (OR OMNISCIENT)

“The Spirit searches everything, even the depths of God... no one comprehends the thoughts of God except the Spirit of God.” (1 Corinthians 2: 10-11) Only a Being who is equal with God possesses such knowledge. It is another proof of His Deity.

3. THE HOLY SPIRIT IS PRESENT EVERYWHERE. (OR OMNIPRESENT)

Genesis 1: 2 records that at Creation **“the Spirit of God was hovering over the face of the waters”**. Job declares that **“By His wind (Spirit) the heavens were made fair”**. (**Job 26: 13**) David, too, recognised that the Holy Spirit cannot be confined by human boundaries when he wrote, **“Where can I go from Your Spirit? Or where shall I flee from Your presence?” (Psalm 139: 7)** The omnipresence of the Spirit is another indicator of His Deity.

4. THE HOLY SPIRIT IS ALL-POWERFUL. (OR OMNIPOTENT)

When the angel Gabriel told Mary, a virgin, that she would bear a son, Jesus, he said, **“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 1: 35**)



Years later, when Peter wrote about the death and resurrection of Christ, he said that He was **“...made alive in the Spirit”**. (**1 Peter 3: 18**)

These are two remarkable statements regarding the omnipotence (all-powerfulness) of the Holy Spirit. The Spirit’s unique power was seen in both the BIRTH and the RESURRECTION of the Lord Jesus.

We also find that many Bible verses link the Spirit with the Father and the Son, as being EQUAL. Here are two examples:

1. When the risen Lord sent His disciples to preach the gospel in all the world, He said, **“Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptising them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit”**. (**Matthew 28: 19**) Note that ‘name’ is singular; this emphasises the oneness and the equality of the Persons of the Godhead.
2. The Key Verse, is a benediction, or a blessing. Read it and reflect on the truth it contains. The fellowship of the Holy Spirit is a special partnership shared by all believers because they have the same Spirit dwelling within them. This stands equally with the grace of Christ and the love of God. If the Holy Spirit is inferior to the Father and the Son, we can be sure Paul would never have written these words!

Our conclusion, then, is that the Holy Spirit is equal with the Father and the Son.

B10 - God the Holy Spirit

Study 2 - The Personality of the Holy Spirit

BIBLE READING:

**John 14: 16, 17, 26; Romans 8: 14-17;
1 Corinthians 2: 10-14.**

KEY VERSE:

**“The Spirit Himself bears witness
with our spirit that we are children of
God...”**

Romans 8: 16

The Holy Spirit is just as real a Person as the Father, and as the Son. He is a Being in His own right, not merely an impersonal influence. He is not SOMETHING, but SOMEONE!

At first, we may find this difficult to understand, because we naturally think of a person as having a physical body. We must, however, grasp the fact that personality does exist either with, or without, a tangible body.

The essential marks of personality are INTELLIGENCE, EMOTION and WILL. These qualities enable us, as human beings, to KNOW, FEEL and CHOOSE. In this Study, we want to show that in the Bible, these three features of personality are shown to be true of the Holy Spirit. Let us examine what it says about each of them:-

1. PERSONALITY IMPLIES INTELLIGENCE - THE ABILITY TO THINK AND TO KNOW.

In **1 Corinthians 2: 11**, Paul states that **“no one comprehends the thoughts of God except the Spirit of God”**. It follows, then, that we need the help of the Spirit of God if we are even to begin to understand God! On the contrary, **verse 14** explains that to **“a natural person”** (someone who has not been born of God), the things of the Spirit of God appear as foolish. The intelligence of the Holy Spirit is also clearly taught when the Lord Jesus speaks of Him as the One who **“will teach you all things, and bring to your remembrance all that I have said to you”**. (**John 14: 26**)

2. PERSONALITY IMPLIES EMOTIONS - THE ABILITY TO FEEL.

Does the Holy Spirit possess emotions, such as love and sorrow? The Bible clearly affirms this; consider the following verses:

a. In **Romans 5: 5** Paul teaches the Christians at Rome that it is by the Holy Spirit that **“God’s love has been poured into our hearts”**. This is a further proof of His personality.

b. **Ephesians 4: 30** instructs Christians to guard against grieving the Holy Spirit of God. This implies His personality, for it is not possible to grieve an influence! Someone who is close to you and who loves you can be grieved by your words and actions - the Holy Spirit is that kind of Person!

3. PERSONALITY IMPLIES WILL - THE ABILITY TO CHOOSE AND TO DO.

The Holy Spirit is presented to us in Scripture as the One who **“will guide you into all the truth... and declare to you the things that are to come”**. (**See John 16: 13**)

In addition, He has the ability to direct the lives of those who put themselves at His disposal. Two examples of the Spirit making His will known to Christians who were serving God are found in **Acts 8: 39, 40 and 16: 6**.

Paul noted the exercise of the Spirit’s will in the churches. After naming some of the spiritual gifts which are to be found in such a church, Paul writes, **“All these are empowered by one and the same Spirit who apportions to each one individually AS HE WILLS”**. (**1 Corinthians 12: 11**)

In conclusion, the Holy Spirit’s personality is intimately involved in our lives. It is He who assures us we are children of God. (**Romans 8: 16**) He is with us every day, not as a mere influence, or an impersonal energy, but indeed as a real Person, our Comforter and Helper, as the Lord Jesus called Him. (**See John 14: 16, 17**) The fact that we cannot see Him does not reduce His personality!



*Thank You, oh My Father
For giving us Your Son
And leaving Your Spirit
Till the work on earth is done.*

- KEITH GREEN

Answer Sheet

B10 - God the Holy Spirit

Study 1 - The Deity of the Holy Spirit

Name: _____ Return address on back of answer sheet

Address: _____

1. What does the term 'Trinity' mean?

/2

2. Answer TRUE or FALSE to the following statements:

a) Christians believe in three Gods. _____

b) Christians believe in one God who is revealed in three Persons. _____

c) The Holy Spirit is greater than men, but less than God. _____

d) The Holy Spirit had an important role in the birth of Jesus. _____

e) The Holy Spirit had nothing to do with Christ's Resurrection. _____

/5

3. Explain these three words which we use to convey how great God is:

a) Omnipotent _____

b) Omnipresence _____

c) Omniscience _____

/3

4. What does the fact that the Holy Spirit possesses all these qualities show about Him?

/1

5. Read again David's two questions in *Psalm 139: 7*.

a) Look at the verses which follow. Can David name a place which answers these questions?

b) Write two ways in which God's presence is experienced in the most faraway places.

/3

6. Read *Luke 1: 35*.

a) How does this verse explain the fact that Jesus had no human father? _____

/3

7. Christians are to be baptised "*in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit*".

a) By whom and to whom was this instruction given? _____

b) What does this teach us about the Holy Spirit? _____

c) Explain why "*name*" is singular in this verse. _____

/4

8. Read the Key Verse. (*2 Corinthians 13: 14*)

a) List the three attributes of the blessing which Paul writes to the Corinthians.

b) By placing the three attributes in one blessing, what does this affirm about the Holy Spirit?

/4

THINK: Think about the blessing in the Key Verse. How would the outworking of this blessing impact a group of believers today?

TOTAL = /25

Answer Sheet

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Study 2 - The Personality of the Holy Spirit

1. What three main characteristics of personality are mentioned in the study?
- _____
- _____
- _____
- /3
2. The personality of the Holy Spirit is emphasised by the use of "He" several times. What does it say "He" will do in the following verses in *John 14*?
- a. Verse 17 _____
- b. Verse 26 _____
- /4
3. 'For true knowledge of God we are dependent upon the Holy Spirit.' Write out part of a verse from *1 Corinthians 2: 10-14*, to support this statement.
- _____
- _____
- /2
4. Read carefully *Ephesians 4: 25-32*, and then write a short paragraph outlining some ways in which a Christian might grieve the Holy Spirit of God.
- _____
- _____
- _____
- _____
- /6
5. 'Every true Christian has the Holy Spirit with him every day.'
- a) Which word in *John 14: 16* confirms that this will always be true? _____
- b) Write a short paragraph about the different roles of the Holy Spirit as a Person who makes a difference in a Christian's life. _____
- _____
- _____
- _____
- /5
6. Using the references, supply the names of these people:
- a) The Holy Spirit filled this man. (*Acts 4: 8*) _____
- b) This man lied to the Holy Spirit. (*Acts 5: 3*) _____
- c) This man was carried away by the Spirit of the Lord. (*Acts 8: 39*) _____
- d) This man foretold by the Spirit what was going to happen. (*Acts 11: 28*) _____
- e) These two men were called by the Holy Spirit to serve God. (*Acts 13: 2*) _____
- /5

THINK: Thank God for His Holy Spirit being with you, reflecting on times when you have known His presence and power in your life.

Answer Sheet

B10 - God the Holy Spirit

Study 3 - The Holy Spirit through the Ages

1. Read *Psalm 104: 24-35* and answer the following questions:

- a) Give one example from these verses of the creative power of the Spirit of God? _____

- b) In what ways does the earth and all life depend on God? _____

- c) How does the writer of this Psalm respond to the wonder of God's creation? _____

 /6

2. John 16: 7, 8 records what the Lord Jesus said about the Holy Spirit.

- a) What promise did He make in **verse 7**? _____

- b) By what name, or title, did He refer to the Holy Spirit? _____
- c) Of what three things does the Spirit "**convict the world**"? _____

 /5

3. Use *Exodus 35: 30-35* to find short answers to these points about Bezalel:

- a) What special ability did God's Spirit impart to him? _____
- b) Name two metals with which he worked. _____
- c) In what other materials did he use his skills? _____

 /3

4. Why do you think it is important for Christians to understand that all their 'gifts' (abilities and skills) come from God? _____ _____

 /2

5. Here are references to people upon whom the Spirit of God came, fitting them to do His work. Write their names beside the Bible reference.

- a) *Judges 6: 34* _____
- b) *1 Samuel 11: 6* _____
- c) *Luke 2: 25* _____
- d) *Acts 8: 26-39* _____

 /2

6. Answer the following:

- a) Read carefully *1 Corinthians 6: 17-20*. Today all believers have the Holy Spirit. What difference should this make to the way we live? _____

- b) What do you think is meant by the phrase: "**your body is a temple of the Holy Spirit**"? _____

 /4

7. In *Luke 4: 1*, Jesus was "**full of the Holy Spirit**" and was "**led by the Spirit**". In *verse 14*, He returned "**in the power of the Spirit**". Explain in your own words what these expressions teach us about the Lord Jesus. _____ _____ _____

 /3

THINK: Am I willing to let the Holy Spirit take control of my life?

TOTAL = /25

Answer Sheet

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Study 4 - The Holy Spirit and the Bible

1. *“All Scripture is breathed out by God.” (2 Timothy 3: 16)* Explain as clearly as you can, what this means.

 /4

2. Outline briefly two ways in which the Bible differs from ordinary books.

 /2

3. Draw a line to match the Old Testament prophecies about the Lord Jesus to the New Testament verses in which the prophecies came true.

Zechariah 13: 7

Psalms 22: 1

Micah 5: 2

Isaiah 42: 1-4

Luke 2: 3-7

Matthew 26: 31

Matthew 12: 15-21

Mark 15: 34

 /4

4. ‘The Bible inspires me’. The Bible is God’s inspired Word. Explain how these two statements differ.

 /4

5. Read again *2 Timothy 3: 16-17*, then answer:

a) For what four uses is scripture *“profitable”*? _____

b) According to *verse 17*, for what does a knowledge of the Bible equip us? _____

 /4

6. The Bible itself claims to be like some everyday things. In these references, to what is the Word of God compared?

a) *Psalms 119: 103* _____

b) *Jeremiah 23: 29* _____

c) *Ephesians 6: 17* _____

d) *1 Peter 2: 2* _____

 /4

7. Read *John 14: 26* and note what Jesus said about the Holy Spirit bringing to their remembrance what He had taught them. (see also *John 16: 13-14*) Keeping in mind that some of the disciples later became the writers of New Testament books, how important would Jesus’ promise about *“the helper”* (or *“comforter”*) be to them?

 /3

THINK: Do I read the Bible, believe it, obey it, and allow it to direct my life?

Return your completed answer sheet to:

TOTAL = /25 UNIT TOTAL = /100

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Study 3 - The Holy Spirit through the Ages

BIBLE READING:

John 16: 7-11; Ephesians 5: 17-21

KEY VERSE:

“And the Spirit of God was hovering over the face of the waters.”

Genesis 1: 2

“The Spirit and the Bride say, ‘Come!’

Revelation 22: 17

In this Study, we trace some of the activities of the Holy Spirit from Creation to Christ’s second coming.

1. THE HOLY SPIRIT, IN CREATION.

The Holy Spirit is mentioned in the first chapter of the Bible. **Genesis 1: 2** teaches us that He played a vital part in Creation. (See Key Verse 1)

In **Psalm 104: 30** we see the creative power of the Spirit of God in creating and sustaining all natural life.

In the book of Job, his friend Elihu says, **“The Spirit of God has made me and the breath of the Almighty gives me life.”** (Job 33: 4)

There are other Bible verses which stress the part played by ‘God’; others refer to the role of the ‘Son’. (See **Exodus 20: 11** and **Hebrews 1: 2**) We can understand these varied references by accepting that Creation results from Father, Son and Spirit working together, in perfect harmony. (See **Genesis 1: 26** and notice the word “us”!)

2. THE HOLY SPIRIT, IN CONVICTION OF SIN.

In the Old Testament the prophets were given power to predict judgment. For example the prophet Micah denounced evil through the power of the Holy Spirit. Micah said the Spirit filled him with **“justice and might, to declare to Jacob his transgression and to Israel his sin.”** (Micah 3: 8)

John the Baptist was **“filled with the Holy Spirit”** and through his preaching many people turned from disobedience to the Lord. (Luke 1: 15-17)

Even today, the Spirit convicts of sin, as **John 16: 7-11** teaches us. We may not fully understand how conscience and the Holy Spirit interact. We should, however, be thankful when the Holy Spirit rebukes us, for sin is always serious in God’s sight!



Stained Glass window depicting Pentecost, in Bayeux Cathedral, France.

3. THE HOLY SPIRIT, IN CHOOSING AND CALLING.

From earliest times, the Spirit has fitted people to speak for God and to work for Him. For example, when Moses was building the Tabernacle, it was the Holy Spirit who gave Bezalel his wonderful skills. (**Exodus 35: 30-35**)

Likewise, judges such as Othniel and Samson (**Judges 3: 9, 10; 14: 6**) and prophets, like Ezekiel (**Ezekiel 2: 2**) received strength by the Spirit to do what God wanted. We, too, can depend on His help, if we yield our lives to Him.

4. THE HOLY SPIRIT, IN CHRIST.

In Study 1, we mentioned the part played by the Holy Spirit in both the birth and the resurrection of the Lord Jesus. Between these two points of time, ALL His words, miracles and movements were Spirit controlled. At His baptism, the Spirit descended from Heaven and remained upon Him. (**John 1: 32**) God gave the Spirit **“without measure”** to Him. (**John 3: 34**)

5. THE HOLY SPIRIT, IN THE CHURCH.

The Holy Spirit descended on the Day of Pentecost, as described in **Acts 2** and as a result of the Spirit’s coming, all Christians were baptised **“in one Spirit ... into one body”**. (**1 Corinthians 12: 13**) In **Ephesians 2: 21, 22** we learn that the church is now being **“being built together into a dwelling place for God by the Spirit”**.

6. THE HOLY SPIRIT, IN THE COMING AGAIN OF THE LORD JESUS.

The Lord Jesus came the first time in lowliness, to die for our sins. He will come again in power, to set up His kingdom. (**Revelation 20: 4-6**) The Holy Spirit awaits that great event, as the second Key Verse shows. (This is the last reference to the Spirit in the Bible) When the Second Coming takes place, the words of Old Testament prophets about a great outpouring of the Spirit will come true. (See **Isaiah 32: 15-17; Ezekiel 37: 9-14; Joel 2: 28, 29**)

We can now see that the Holy Spirit has been active through the ages. All of us, who belong to the Lord Jesus, should be convinced that God, the Holy Spirit, has a plan for us. He wants to work in us, and through us, for God’s glory and the blessing of others.

B10 - God the Holy Spirit

Study 4 - The Holy Spirit and the Bible

BIBLE READING:

2 Timothy 3: 14-17; 2 Peter 1: 19-21

KEY VERSE:

“All Scripture is breathed out by God, and profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, for training in righteousness.”

2 Timothy 3: 16

In this Study, we concentrate on the very special place which the Holy Spirit had in giving us God’s written Word, the Bible.

At the outset, we remind ourselves that the Bible is a collection of 66 books, written over a period of about 1500 years. The writers came from a wide variety of backgrounds. Because they lived at different stages of history, and in different parts of the world, there was no possibility of them meeting together to discuss what they should each write!

How remarkable, then, that the end-product should be a book which is coherent and meaningful! All the parts fit together, like a jigsaw puzzle, to show a unique, wonderful Person, the Lord Jesus Christ.



In this amazing book, we note that prophecies are shown to come true, hundreds of years after they were first uttered. For example, Micah, 700 years before it happened, foretold Bethlehem as the place of Christ’s birth. (**Micah 5: 2**) Scenes connected with His suffering and death are vividly portrayed in such chapters as **Psalm 22 and Isaiah 53**. The New Testament shows how all these things came true.

How, then, do we explain the origin and the ongoing effectiveness of this remarkable book? The answer lies in this: The Bible is THE INSPIRED WORD OF GOD. Or, to say it in another way: We believe in THE INSPIRATION OF THE HOLY SCRIPTURES.

We must be clear about the meaning of these terms. Let us first dismiss TWO wrong ideas!

1. We do not simply mean that the Bible is ‘the inspiring Word of God’. If that were the case, we would be saying that the Bible inspires us to live better lives, to be wise and good! The Bible should have that kind of effect upon us, but to speak of it as ‘THE INSPIRED WORD OF GOD’ means much, much more!
2. Neither do we mean that the writers were ‘inspired’ in the same way as poets, artists and musicians are ‘inspired’ to produce masterpieces.

What, then, is meant by the inspiration of Scripture? The expression comes from **2 Timothy 3: 16** which is our Key Verse. Paul is speaking about how God communicated His thoughts and words to the writers of the Scriptures. The word ‘inspired’ pictures God ‘breathing out’. This refers not only to the thoughts, but also to the very words of the original writings. The result is that we have, in the Holy Scriptures, a completely reliable revelation of God Himself.

From **2 Peter 1: 20, 21** we learn something more about how God ‘breathed out’ His Word. It was by the agency of the Holy Spirit - **“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”**. The picture is of the writers of Scripture being ‘carried along’ by the Holy Spirit, in much the same way as a sailing boat is ‘carried along’, as the wind fills its sails.

This is indeed what the Bible claims for itself in chapter after chapter. Read what David said in **2 Samuel 23: 2**, **“The Spirit of the Lord speaks by me, His word is on my tongue”**. And again, **“The Holy Spirit spoke beforehand by the mouth of David concerning Judas...”**. (**Acts 1: 16**)

We accept, therefore, the Bible’s total accuracy and its final authority. The Lord Jesus has given it His seal of approval, when He said, **“Scripture cannot be broken”**. (**John 10: 35**)

This is the first of three units on **God the Holy Spirit**.