

LESSON XI

The Holy Spirit

INTRODUCTION

There is much confusion on this subject of the Holy Spirit, hence a proper study of the teachings of the Bible concerning the Holy Spirit is very important. Together with this is the fact that the Holy Spirit is intimately involved in the life of a Christian. Therefore, in order to live a successful Christian life we need to know more about the existence of the Holy Spirit, the work of the Holy Spirit and the Holy Spirit's operation in our lives.

We studied a little bit concerning the Holy Spirit in the chapter on the Trinity of God. In that chapter we spoke about the Holy Spirit being part of the God-head, being one personality of the three personalities of God. We will expand this some more in this lesson as we first look at the personality of the Holy Spirit.

CHAPTER I

THE PERSONALITY OF THE HOLY SPIRIT

It is very clear that the Holy Spirit does exist. We have seen in the lesson on the Trinity of God that the Holy Spirit was spoken about many times by God and by Jesus Christ. The Holy Spirit's work is outlined and therefore the existence of the Holy Spirit can be clearly seen.

But we should be careful to recognize the type of existence the Holy Spirit has. We should not believe, rather we should not simply attribute to the Holy Spirit certain powers and abilities and deny it the personality of the God-head that the Bible ascribes to it. We should not think of the Holy Spirit as being merely a power, or merely an influence, or merely something that we could gain in our lives to make us better. The Bible declares that the Holy Spirit does exist and is a personality of God.

We can see this by the use of personal pronouns, referring to the Holy Spirit, in the Bible. For example, in John chapter 15 verse 26, Jesus talks about the Spirit saying, "But when the comforter is come, whom I will send unto you from the Father, He shall testify of me." So Christ referred to the Spirit, and calls Him 'He'. A personal pronoun was used by the Son of God Himself, to refer to the Holy Spirit. Elsewhere in John's Gospel in chapter 16 in verses 7, 8, 13 and 14, again and again Jesus talks about the Holy Spirit using the personal pronoun 'he'.

Furthermore, very often the Bible ascribes characteristics to the Holy Spirit that are only ascribed to a person. We read in I Corinthians chapter 2 verses 10 & 11 that the Holy Spirit

knows the things of a man. Here we see knowledge ascribed to the Holy Spirit. We also find love ascribed to the Holy Spirit. In Romans 15:30 we could read this. We could read in Nehemiah 9 verse 20 that intelligence and goodness are characteristics ascribed to the Holy Spirit. And then of course in Ephesians 4 verse 30 we read, "And grieve not the Holy Spirit of God whereby ye are sealed unto the day of redemption." Therefore we can conclude that since personal characteristics like knowledge, love, intelligence, goodness, grief, are ascribed to the Holy Spirit, He is a Personality and that a Personality of God. In Romans 8:26 Jesus tells us that the Holy Spirit makes intercession for us. Here again personality is involved and in relationship to man we read in Romans 8:14, "For as many as are led by the Spirit of God, they are the sons of God." In this verse we see the Holy Spirit leading or directing men what to do. We read of the Holy Spirit commanding men and calling men to work and appointing them of office. So we can time and time again see the Bible talking about the Holy Spirit as a Person. Realizing that the Holy Spirit is a person our attitudes towards the Holy Spirit should be so adjusted. We should definitely not treat the Holy Spirit as an intangible power. He is a Person of the God-head with personal characteristics and we should strive to be in communion and fellowship with this personality of the God-head. Read II Corinthians chapter 13 verse 14. The names of the Holy Spirit: The Bible uses various names referring to the Holy Spirit. We will not list all of them here.

CHAPTER II

THE DEITY OF THE HOLY SPIRIT

The Holy Spirit is God. We run into problems if we say He is part of God, because that would not really be correct. We have seen that the Holy Spirit is part of the God-head and by God-head we mean the three personalities of God. God as Father, God as Son, and now God as Holy Spirit. Since the Holy Spirit is God, all Divine characteristics that pertain to God the Father and to Jesus Christ the Son also pertain to the Holy Spirit.

When we think of these Divine characteristics we use the Word of God to aid in our understanding of it. That is, the Word of God alone is our guide in determining that the Holy Spirit is God.

The Bible says that God is eternal and the Bible also says that the Holy Spirit is eternal. In Hebrews chapter 9 verse 14, we read that "the eternal Spirit offered Himself without blemish unto God." Only God is eternal. So the Holy Spirit being eternal is God too.

Another attribute of God is His omniscience or His ability to know all things, to be all wise. The Holy Spirit too is omniscient. We read in I Corinthians chapter 2 verse 11, "For who among men knoweth the things of man, save the Spirit of man which is in him? Even so the things of God none knoweth save the Spirit of God." This means that the things of God no man knows or what God knows no man can know, except the Spirit of God.

Again the Holy Spirit, being God, is omnipotent. That is, He is all-powerful. We read in John 14:26, “But the Comforter, which is the Holy Ghost whom the Father will send in my name, He shall teach you all things and bring all things to your remembrance whatsoever I have said unto you.”

Likewise the Holy Spirit is omnipresent. That is, everywhere. God is everywhere. And the Holy Spirit, being God is also everywhere. In Psalms 139 verses 7-10 we read about not being able to get away from God’s Spirit. And the question is asked, ‘Whether shall I go from thy Spirit?’

So the attributes of God are found as being the same attributes of God are found as being the same attributes of the Holy Spirit. God is one and so the Holy Spirit having the same attributes, is God too. That is, One God.

Again we find the Holy Spirit doing what God the Father does. The Bible says that creation is part of the Holy Spirit’s activity. We read in Romans 8:11, “But if the Spirit of Him that raised up Jesus from the dead dwell in you He that raised up Christ from the dead shall also quicken (make alive) your mortal bodies by His Spirit that dwelleth in you.” And we read again in II Peter 1:21, “For no prophecy overcame by the will of man, by men from God being moved by the Holy Ghost.” In both these Scriptures, we could see that life-giving activities are ascribed to the Holy Spirit. We find various statements in both the Old Testament and the New Testament showing that divine activities are attributed to God the Father and His Son, are also attributed to God the Holy Spirit.

Also the name of the Holy Spirit is used in such a way, in the Scriptures as only the name of God is used. It is given equal authority with God in the commission to the disciples in Matthew’s Gospel 28:19. “Go ye therefore and teach all nations baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost.” And in II Corinthians 13:14 we read, “The Grace of the Lord Jesus Christ and the love of God and the Communion of the Holy Ghost be with you all. Amen.” We can see that equal importance is given to the name of the Holy Spirit together with the name of Christ and the name of the Holy Spirit together with the name of Christ and the name of God the Father. This too is an indication of the Divinity of the Holy Spirit.

We can conclude then that the Holy Spirit is God. This is beautifully summed up in this statement by R.A. Torrey: “By the ascription of all the Divine attributes, and several distinctively Divine operations, by referring statements which in the Old Testament distinctly named Jehovah, the Lord, or God, as their subject to the Holy Spirit in the New Testament, by coupling the name of the Holy Spirit with that of God in a way that it would be impossible to couple that of any finite being with that of the deity, by calling the Holy Spirit “God”, in all these unmistakable ways, God in His Word distinctly proclaims that the Holy Spirit is a Divine Person.”

CHAPTER III

THE WORK OF THE HOLY SPIRIT

One indication of the work of the Holy Spirit is given when we study the names of the Holy Spirit. We will list these names and their Scriptural references. The names themselves indicate the different types of work that can be attributed to the Holy Spirit. Here is a partial list:

The Spirit of God	:	I Corinthians 3:16
The Spirit of Holiness	:	Romans 1:4
The Holy Spirit of Promise	:	Ephesians 1:13
The Spirit of Truth	:	John 15:26
The Spirit of Life	:	Romans 8:2
The Spirit of Grace	:	Hebrews 10:29
The Spirit of Glory	:	I Peter 4:14
The Comforter	:	John 14:26

We have already mentioned that the Spirit was active in creation, and the Spirit does have power to give life. Together with this we can see in the Bible that the Spirit was active in the inspiration of the Scriptures and in the establishment of the Church. But we need to know as to how this Spirit operates in the life of Christians. And how the Holy Spirit helps them.

The Bible makes one thing clear. All those who belong to Jesus Christ through faith and obedience become possessors of the Holy Spirit of God. There are many Scriptures that prove this to us. In John's Gospel chapter 3 verses 1-5, we see that Jesus said, "In order for us to be born again, we should be born of water and of the Spirit." When we are regenerated we are renewed by the Holy Spirit (Titus 3:5). Then again, in I Corinthians chapter 6 verses 19 & 20 we are told that our bodies are the temple of the Holy Spirit. And Romans 8:9 & 10 says that if we do not have the Spirit of Christ in us, we are none of His, meaning we do not belong to Christ. In Romans 8:11 we are told that the Spirit dwells in us.

We can see therefore, that the Holy Spirit does live in the lives of a born again person, that is a Christian. But when do we receive the Spirit of God in us? Or how do we receive the Holy Spirit?

In the Book of Acts chapter 2 verse 28, Peter preached and said that if we repent and are baptized in the name of Christ, we will receive the forgiveness of sins and the gift of God's Holy Spirit. The benefits from repentance and baptism are remission of sins and the giving of God's Holy Spirit to man. We can see then, from this verse, that baptism is the point of reception for the Holy Spirit in the life of a person.

If we read Acts chapter 19:1-6, we find Paul asking certain disciples if they had the Holy Spirit. They said, "No". And Paul concluded that they did not have the Holy Spirit, because they were not baptized in the name of Christ for the remission of sins, but were baptized according to the preaching of John. John preached baptism unto repentance. A person when baptized by John, or according to John, was being baptized for repentance and as a sign that he

would look unto the coming of the Christ. But when Christ came down to earth and died on the Cross of Calvary and rose again, He instituted a new way of life. This new way of life begins when we accept Christ as our Saviour, believing in Him as God, and when we repent of our sins and are baptized in the name of the Father and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost (Matthew 28:19 & 20). So therefore, in Acts chapter 19 we read that Paul told these disciples to be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ for the reception of the Holy Spirit. And this collaborates with Acts chapter 2 verse 38 that baptism in the name of Christ for the remission of sins gives a person the beginning of a new life because of the reception of the Holy Spirit.

So when a person receives the Holy Spirit according to the Scriptures, he begins a new life and that new life is powered by the Holy Spirit. The Holy Spirit helps the Christians in many ways.

- (1) ***The Christian is able to overcome sin through the Holy Spirit.*** In Romans 8:13 we read: “We shall live if by the Spirit ye put to death the deeds of the body.” That is, by ourselves we cannot, but with the power of the Spirit we can overcome that which is detrimental to us, meaning sin. In Romans 8 verse 4, we are told that with the Spirit’s power we can keep the law of God. That is, even though we are earthly we can live lives that are pleasing in God’s sight, overcoming sin, through the power of the Spirit. Galatians 5:16 says, “We should walk after the Spirit and not fulfill the lust of the flesh.” So with the power of the Spirit we can live lives that overcome sin and give us the victory.
- (2) ***Similarly, the Holy Spirit strengthens the Christian with power.*** Ephesians chapter 3 verses 16-19 tells us that we may be strengthened with power through the Holy Spirit in the inward man. With the Holy Spirit dwelling in us we can receive strength spiritually to live the Christian life. We not only are able to overcome sin, but we are able to keep walking in spiritual righteousness if we acknowledge the Spirit of God in us. In the same way the Holy Spirit leads us in holy living. Romans 8:14 “For as many as are led by the Spirit of God, they are the sons of God.”
- (3) ***The Christians gets help in prayer through the Holy Spirit.*** Romans 8:26 tells us that the Holy Spirit intercedes for us when we pray. In Ephesians 3:20, “He is able to do exceedingly above all that we ask or think, according to the power that worketh in us.” God knows our needs more than we do too. Through the Spirit we can get these spiritual needs met as we pray.

Christians should realize the power of the Spirit in prayer, particularly when they are overcome by distress or sorrow or pain. This is when we should realize most that when we come to God in prayer we can know the Spirit intercedes for us in these times of trial. So when we are in moments of greatest needs and seem unable to even voice our prayers due to our spiritual pain, we can know the power of the Spirit that intercedes for us.

- (4) ***The Holy Spirit helps us as we communicate the Gospel to others.*** We need to depend upon the Spirit of God while we proclaim the Gospel. This does not mean

that we should rely upon the leading and the guiding of the Spirit, together with the words that we know. Paul said that he did not go to people with excellence of speech or of wisdom, but he came in demonstration of the Spirit and of power (I Corinthians 2:1-5).

It is good to remember here that the inspired Word of God is the Spirit given message. Naturally, since the Spirit of God was active in the inspiration of the Scriptures then it is only logical to call upon the Spirit's help as we proclaim that Word of God.

- (5) ***The Holy Spirit assures us that we are children of God.*** Romans 8:16, "The Spirit Himself beareth witness with our spirits that we are the children of God." That is, we know within ourselves that we are Christians when we do what the Holy Spirit has shown us through His Word. Again, we know we belong to God and are assured of this when we have obeyed the Spirit inspired Scriptures, through believing in Christ, repenting of our sins and being baptized.
- (6) ***The Holy Spirit also helps in the worship of the Christian.*** Philippians 3:3 says, "We worship by the Spirit of God and glory in Christ Jesus and we have no confidence in the flesh."
- (7) ***The Christian is guided in daily living and in service through the power of the Spirit.*** We find instances in the Book of Acts when the Apostles and others were led definitely by the Spirit in various details. In Acts chapter 8, Philip was led by the Spirit as to where to go and meet the man from Ethiopia. Paul, in Acts chapter 16 was forbidden to go into what was called then Asia by the Spirit of God. We need to rely on God's Spirit for guidance and not put confidence in our own wisdom and ability. James said that if we lack wisdom we should ask of God (James 1:5-7). And in Matthew 21:22 we are told to ask in faith not doubting. So as we pray and depend upon God's Spirit to lead and guide us we can know that the Spirit will help us in daily living, and the areas where we serve our Lord and our God.

The Scriptures do give us other ways by which the Spirit of God helps the Christian. But in general the above mentioned ways may include the others. We are told, together with this, not to quench the Spirit in our lives. It is possible to smother the power of the Holy Spirit in us and to forget the Spirit of God and live our own lives with our own wisdom.

Again, we are told to **walk by the Spirit.** Galatians 5:16 & 25 tells us this. Colossians 3:1-3 says, "Set your mind upon the things which are above and not on things on the earth." And Romans 8:5, "They that are after the flesh mind the things of the flesh. But they that are after the Spirit mind the things of the Spirit." The Christians should be disciplined spiritually that he walks daily according to the guidance of God. This is possible as we go to God in prayer; as we meditate and study His Word; and as we strive to obey that Word of God.

Ephesians 4:30 tells us **"Grieve not the Holy Spirit of God."** Many Christians grieve or hurt the Spirit of God, by disobeying what God wants them to do. That is, by opposing God's

Will. Again, Christians grieve the Spirit of God by totally ignoring God's guidance and choosing according to their own likes and dislikes. Our lives should be so in tune with God and His Will that no matter how displeasing something might be to us, if it is God's Will we should accept, and then know that the Spirit of God can help us even in those things. Eventually, as we accept God's guidance through His Spirit, we will find that which we do not like can become pleasing.

CONCLUSION

As we study concerning the Spirit of God we should keep within the confines of God's Word. It is necessary, as we study, to be careful to analyze the Scriptures carefully. There are instances given in the New Testament as to the miraculous power of the Holy Spirit in the lives of the twelve Apostles. We also find that the Apostles themselves imparted that miraculous power to certain people only. These who received the power through the Apostles, were not able themselves to pass it on. Therefore, we should not expect the powers that the Apostles had to be given to us today.

This does not mean that the Holy Spirit is not in power in our lives. As we have already seen the Holy Spirit is active in the life of a Christian in a very powerful way. But to expect the Spirit to give us powers that were not intended for us, is in a way to grieve the Holy Spirit. As we go through the Scriptures we will find that some of these miraculous powers of the Spirit were given for very particular and specific occasions and circumstances. But for all Christians the fruits of the Spirit are readily available. This is what we should gain and develop as we live the Christian life. We can read this in Galatians chapter 5 verses 22 & 23. "But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, long suffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, temperance; against such there is no law." And verse 25, "If we live in the Spirit, let us also walk in the Spirit."

Name:.....

Student No.....

Grade.....

QUESTIONS ON LESSON XI

THE HOLY SPIRIT

Note: Answers to the questions below are found in the lesson material. Read the lesson carefully before answering. Try to answer in your own words, as much as possible. Wherever necessary, just fill in the blanks, or choose the correct word. Print out this page if you like. If you wish to send in the answers or to write further comments, or ask any questions yourself, do so on a separate sheet of paper and put your name and student number in a prominent place.

CHAPTER I

THE PERSONALITY OF THE HOLY SPIRIT

1. Tell us why you know that the Holy Spirit is a personality of God.

3. Do you have the Holy Spirit in your life, helping you?
(Without it you are not a **new** person).

4. Give 3 ways by which the Holy Spirit helps the Christian.

Send answer sheets to:

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