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The Holy Spirit

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Introduction

The Holy Spirit

God the eternal¹ Holy Spirit was active with the Father and the Son when they created the world. The Holy Spirit took part with the Father and the Son in saving people. The Holy Spirit inspired the writers of the Bible. He filled Christ's life with power. He attracts humans and makes them aware of their sins. He renews and changes into the image of God those who accept Jesus. He was sent by the Father and the Son always to be with His children. He gives spiritual gifts and power to the church, so the church can tell the world about Christ. He leads the church into all truth.—Adapted from *Seventh-day Adventists Believe . . .* (2nd ed.) (Nampa, Idaho: Pacific Press® Publishing Association, 2005), p. 69.

The Holy Spirit is important to our faith. We could not be Christians without the Holy Spirit and His work in our lives. What Christ has done for us works well for us only through the work of the Holy Spirit. Suppose today we accept Christ as our Savior and claim His righteousness (holiness). Or suppose today we decide through God's grace to put away sin and obey His law. If we do, we are letting the Holy Spirit work within us.

The Bible talks about the Holy Spirit more than three hundred times, more than one hundred times in the Old Testament and more than two hundred times in the New Testament. So, we can see how important it is to study the Holy Spirit. It is especially important now to study the Holy Spirit because there are many wrong doctrines. Many of these doctrines are about the Holy Spirit. For example, some people do not think the Holy Spirit is a real being. Other people do not believe the Holy Spirit is a member of the Godhead.²

Other people focus on the Holy Spirit's work and His gifts, but they pay little attention to the obedience and sanctification³ that are the results of the Holy Spirit's work in our lives. We need to learn about the Holy Spirit from the Bible.

Seventh-day Adventists should be very interested in getting to know the Holy Spirit for two reasons: (1) We believe in Christ's death for our sins. We believe in His work for us in the heavenly sanctuary. But it is only the work of the Spirit that can make Christ's work successful while we await the Second Coming. (2) The Holy Spirit inspired the writers of the Bible (2 Peter 1:21). So, when the Holy Spirit speaks today, He will say things that agree with the Bible. If we hear any religious talk that does not agree with the Bible, then that talk is not from the

¹eternal—forever; without beginning or end; lasting forever.

²Godhead—God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Spirit make up the Godhead.

³sanctification—becoming like Jesus with the help of the Holy Spirit. Jesus living in us through the Holy Spirit so that we develop Jesus' character; the Holy Spirit's work of making us holy.

Holy Spirit. First John 4:1 tells us to “put the spirits to the test” (NIRV). The only sure standard⁴ for that test is the Bible.

This Bible study guide teaches that the Holy Spirit is a Bible doctrine. But this guide also focuses on the daily and useful work of the Holy Spirit in our lives. The Holy Spirit is God’s way of reaching sinners. We cannot measure the Spirit’s work. The real power of His work is shown in our personal experiences and in the life and power of the church. So, this guide will show that the Spirit is God’s way of helping us become new people in Christ. The Holy Spirit’s work is fundamental (basic) to Christianity.

May the Lord bless all of us as we try to understand the Holy Spirit’s work and how to receive Him. Learning about the Holy Spirit will help you to “be filled with everything God has for you” (Ephesians 3:19, NIRV).

Now deceased (dead), Dr. Arnold V. Wallenkampf worked in the church for many years as a pastor and a professor. In his last years before retirement, Dr. Wallenkampf was an associate director of the Biblical Research Institute at the General Conference of Seventh-day Adventists.

⁴standard—example, guide, principle, or law.