

The Holy Spirit as a God-Person



SABBATH—MARCH 25

READ FOR THIS WEEK'S STUDY: Genesis 1:26; Genesis 3:22; Isaiah 6:8; Matthew 28:19; 1 Corinthians 12:4-11, 28; 2 Corinthians 13:14.

MEMORY VERSE: “So you must go and make disciples of all nations. Baptize them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit” (Matthew 28:19, NIV).

WE DO NOT HAVE TO STUDY THE BIBLE VERY MUCH BEFORE WE READ ABOUT THE HOLY SPIRIT. Read Genesis 1:2. Then read Revelation 22:17. Between Genesis 1:2 and Revelation 22:17, we see that the work of the Holy Spirit is very active. In the New Testament, we see that the Holy Spirit is an important part of salvation.

This week, we will concentrate on the Holy Spirit as God. The Holy Spirit is not just a nonliving force that comes from God. The Holy Spirit is God. The Holy Spirit is One of the Three Persons who make up the Godhead.¹

Study this week's lesson to prepare for Sabbath, April 1.

¹ Godhead—God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Spirit make up the Godhead.

SUNDAY—MARCH 26**THE TRIUNE (THREE-IN-ONE) GOD
(Genesis 1:26).**

The second of the 28 Fundamental Beliefs of the Seventh-day Adventist Church reads, “There is one God: Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. God is a unity of Three co-eternal² Persons.” —Adapted from *Seventh-day Adventists Believe . . .* (2nd ed.) (Nampa, Idaho: Pacific Press® Publishing Association, 2005), p. 23. Adventists and millions of other Christians believe in God’s triune nature. This means one God (Deuteronomy 6:4) who lives as Three Persons. That idea itself might not be simple. But the Bible proof for a triune God is powerful. Not being able to fully understand something about God is a very poor reason for us to refuse to accept Him (Job 11:7; 1 Corinthians 13:12).

How do the following verses point to the Three-in-One Godhead?

Genesis 1:26_____

Genesis 3:22_____

Genesis 11:7_____

Isaiah 6:8_____

John 1:1-3_____

John 8:58_____

“The Father is all the fullness of the Godhead in body. He cannot be seen by humans. The Son is all the fullness of the Godhead in human form. The Word (the Bible) of God declares the Son to be ‘the exact image of God.’ . . . The Comforter (the Holy Spirit) is what Christ (the Son) promised to send after He went to heaven. The Comforter is the Holy Spirit in all the fullness of the Godhead. The Holy Spirit makes clear the power of God’s grace to all who receive and believe in Christ as a personal Savior. There are Three living Persons of the Godhead. In the name of these Three great Powers (the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit), those who receive Christ by living faith are baptized. These powers will cooperate with obedient believers in trying to

² co-eternal—God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Spirit are all eternal. Eternal means without beginning or end and lasting forever.

live the new life in Christ.”—Adapted from *Evangelism*,³ pp. 614, 615.

What comparisons,⁴ such as a triangle or a fork with three prongs (pointed ends), can help someone understand the idea of how one God can be Three equal Persons?



MONDAY—MARCH 27

**GOD THE HOLY SPIRIT—PART 1
(Matthew 1:20).**

Most people do not have a problem with the idea of the Father as God. The idea of Jesus as fully God in human form may be a little difficult to understand, but people still can understand this idea. An all-powerful God should be able to put Himself in human form if He chooses to.

But the idea of the Holy Spirit as God is much more difficult to understand. It is much easier to think of the Holy Spirit as a nonliving force or a

power, such as gravity, that comes from God and circles the world.

But the Bible is clear that the Holy Spirit is God. The Holy Spirit is One of the Three Persons of the Godhead.

How do the following verses help us understand that the Holy Spirit is part of the Godhead?

Genesis 1:2_____

Matthew 1:20_____

Matthew 28:19_____

John 14:16, 17_____

Acts 5:3, 4_____

Romans 8:11_____

1 Corinthians 2:10, 11_____

³ evangelism—the spreading of the gospel to the world.

⁴ comparisons—how things are the same.

2 Corinthians 3:17 _____

Character traits⁵ of the Holy Spirit include truth (John 16:13), life (Romans 8:2), and omnipotence⁶ (1 Corinthians 2:10, 11). All of these traits are connected with the Godhead. Jesus says blasphemy⁷ spoken against Him can be forgiven. But blasphemy spoken against the Holy Spirit cannot be forgiven (Matthew 12:31, 32). This does not make much sense if the Holy Spirit were not God. Jesus was given life in Mary's womb through the Holy Spirit (Matthew 1:20). This is also difficult to understand if the Holy Spirit were not truly God. (Also read Genesis 1:2.)



Jesus was given life through God, the Holy Spirit.

⁵ character traits—the good or bad things about our character. A bad temper is a bad character trait. Wanting to help people is a good character trait.

⁶ omnipotence—having power that is not limited.

⁷ blasphemy—saying evil things against God.

TUESDAY—MARCH 28

GOD THE HOLY SPIRIT—PART 2 (Acts 5:1-11).

How does 1 Corinthians 12:4-11, 28 help us understand the Holy Spirit as God?

First Corinthians 12, 13, and 14 speak of God's gifts to church members. These chapters also treat the Holy Spirit and God as equals. The Holy Spirit (1 Corinthians 12:4-11), and Lord, and God (1 Corinthians 12:5, 6, 28) are written about as being the same.

What did Jesus call the Helper (NKJV) He was going to send His followers after He went up to heaven? John 14:16.

In John 14:16, Jesus talks about His Father as an equal. The word *another* means "another of the same kind." So, Jesus planned to send the disciples Someone who is God. In the past, Jesus had related Himself to His Father. Now He relates Himself to the Holy Spirit. So, we know the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit are all part of the Godhead.

Have you ever lied to the Holy Spirit as Ananias and Sapphira did? If so, what should you do now?

WEDNESDAY—MARCH 29

THE UNITY OF GOD (2 Corinthians 13:14; Matthew 28:19).

How do 2 Corinthians 13:14 and Matthew 28:19 help us see the Godlike nature of the Holy Spirit?

Christians often have been accused of being polytheists. *Polytheists* means “worshippers of more than one God.” This accusation is false. We admit there are Three Persons in the Godhead. But these Persons “are one in purpose, in mind, in character, but not in person.” —*The Ministry [Work] of Healing*, p. 422. Christians do not believe in three separate gods. Christians believe in one God who is shown in Three Persons. These Persons work together in perfect unity with one another.

How does Deuteronomy 6:4 show God?

The Hebrew word for “God” in this verse is plural.⁸

There has been much debate about the plural word for God in Deuteronomy 6:4 and other verses. As believers in the Three-in-One God, we see Deuteronomy 6:4 as proof for a Three-in-One God but certainly not as full proof. There are other verses in the Bible that give better proof to support our understanding of the Three-in-One God.

What hope can you find in the

⁸ plural—more than one.

⁹ Gospel writers—the Gospels are the New Testament books of Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John. The Gospel writers are the people who wrote these books.

truth that all Three Persons of the Godhead are involved in salvation?

THURSDAY—MARCH 30

PROOF OF THE HOLY SPIRIT AS A PERSON (John 15:26; John 16:13).

The Bible shows the Holy Spirit as a person who can think (John 14:26; John 15:26; Romans 8:16). The Bible also shows that the Holy Spirit has a will and feelings (Acts 16:7; 1 Corinthians 12:11; Ephesians 4:30).

The Bible shows that the Holy Spirit can act as a person. The Holy Spirit can speak well (1 Timothy 4:1), send people on missions (Acts 10:19, 20), stop people from going places (Acts 16:7), command people (Acts 11:12), refuse to permit actions (Acts 16:6), call ministers of the gospel (Acts 13:2), give them their responsibilities (Acts 20:28), and work for people’s good (Romans 8:26, 27). These actions are things the Holy Spirit can do only as a person instead of as just some power or influence.

How did Jesus speak of the Holy Spirit? John 15:26; John 16:13, 14. What do these verses tell us about the work of the Holy Spirit?

The word *Spirit* is not a he or a she in Greek. But the Gospel writers⁹ speak of the Holy Spirit as a he. The Holy Spirit speaks of Himself as “Me” in Acts 13:2. So, it is proper to use

“He” when speaking of the Holy Spirit. The use of “it” for the Holy Spirit in the original Greek and in English has become popular for symbols of the Holy Spirit such as fire, wind, and oil.



Fire is a symbol for the Holy Spirit.

What does it mean to you that the Holy Spirit is really God? Why is it comforting to know that God the Holy Spirit is closely working in your life?

FRIDAY—MARCH 31

ADDITIONAL STUDY: Ellen G. White, *Evangelism*, pp. 615–617; *The Seventh-day Adventist Bible Commentary*, vol. 1, p. 209; Ellen G. White Comments, *The Seventh-day Adventist Bible Commentary*, vol. 6, pp. 1052, 1053; *Counsels to Parents, Teachers, and Students*, p. 530; *Testimonies for the Church*, vol. 4, pp. 585, 586.

“We need to understand that the Holy Spirit is as much a person as God is. For this reason, the Holy Spirit is walking through these grounds.”

—Adapted from *Evangelism*, p. 616.

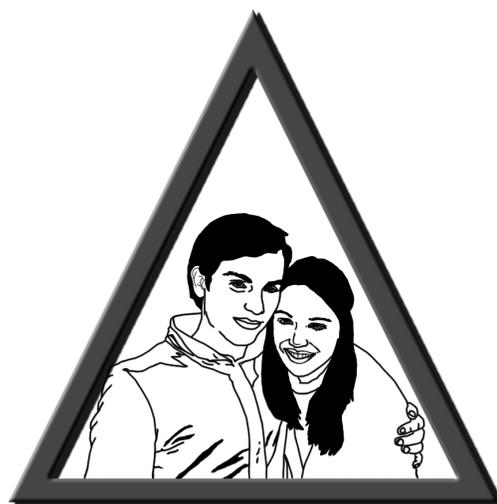
“The Holy Spirit is a person. If He were not a person, He could not show us that we are God’s children, and we could not show others that we are God’s children. He must also be a God-Person. If not, He could not search out the secrets that lie hidden in God’s mind. ‘Who can know the thoughts of another person? Only a person’s own spirit can know them. In the same way, only the [Holy] Spirit of God knows God’s thoughts.’ (1 Corinthians 2:11, NIV).”

—Adapted from *Evangelism*, p. 617.

“The prince of the power of evil can only be stopped by the power of God in the Third Person of the Godhead, the Holy Spirit.”—Adapted from *Evangelism*, p. 617.

“We are to cooperate with the Three highest Powers in heaven—the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit. These Powers will work through us, making us workers together with God.”

—Adapted from *Evangelism*, p. 617.



Let us cooperate with God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Spirit.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS:

1. Ask the class members to talk about their own personal experiences with the Holy Spirit. Ask them to share how He has changed their lives.
2. Trying to understand the idea of the Three-in-One God is not always easy. There are limits to how much we can understand. Why should these limits not prevent us from believing the Bible about the Three-in-One God?