

Knowing the Holy Spirit

1. *The Holy Spirit Is a Person*

1. **The Holy Spirit is a great and holy Person, not a mere force or power.** He is a “He,” not an “it.” Masculine personal pronouns describe him in John 14:16-17, etc. He is God, the Third Person of the Trinity, of one essence with the Father and the Son. He received His name from His work of transmitting the powerful, regenerating, restoring, renewing Spirit of God. Always the perfect Gentleman, He is very tender, compassionate, and selfless, gentle and loving, yet divinely powerful. He gives, guards, and preserves the life of all creation. He is Truth, speaks only the truth, and guides us into all truth. He doesn’t draw attention to Himself but is content to operate in the background and exalt Jesus and the Father. He breathes understanding into us of the Word of God. He helps us cleanse ourselves from sin and empowers us to decisively overcome it. He is our indwelling Comforter, Counselor, Advocate, and Helper, One who stands alongside to give aid and assistance. John 14:15-17, 26, 15:26, 16:7-15

The Holy Spirit was present at the creation. “And the Spirit of God was hovering over the face of the waters” (Gen. 1:2, Psalm 33:6). In the beginning God the Father conceived the creation, God the Son formed it, and God the Holy Spirit imparted its life. In the Nicene Creed the Holy Spirit is called “the Lord and Giver of life.”

2. **He has several names.** He is called the Holy Ghost, the Holy Spirit, the Spirit, the Spirit of God, the Spirit of Life (Romans 8:2). Jesus liked to call Him the Spirit of Truth and the Helper (or the Comforter). (There is no difference in meaning between the words “Holy Ghost” and “Holy Spirit.” Ghost and Spirit are two different translations of the same Greek word (*pneuma*).
3. **There are several symbols by which He is known.**

Wind: The Greek and Hebrew words for “spirit” also mean “wind” or “breath,” that which conveys life. Wind is also an appropriate image for the Holy Spirit because wind is used to winnow wheat, separating the wheat from the chaff without damaging the wheat. Matthew 3:11-12. The Holy Spirit is also known as the new “breath of life,” breathed by Jesus into all who believe on Him. John 20:22.

Water: Water quenches thirst. Mankind is spiritually dry and thirsty. The Holy Spirit is like water in that His presence quenches the spiritual thirst of mankind. Nothing else in all creation can quench the thirst of our spirit man except the Holy Spirit. John 4:13-14. Water is also used to cleanse away dirt. The Holy Spirit’s power acts at times like spiritual water that has the ability to cleanse us from sin and uncleanness. Ezekiel 36:25, John 3:5

Fire: Fire represents the consuming power of the Holy Spirit against sin. He burns up the chaff in our lives with unquenchable fire. When you overcome it with His help, He’ll burn it up. He wants us to stay “hot” with His unquenchable fire so sin cannot live in us. Matthew 3:11-12. Fire also refers to the “pillar of fire” that guided the children of Israel in the wilderness. The Holy Spirit guides us throughout our lives. Exodus 13:21-22, John 16:13

Oil: The Old Testament priests were “*anointed*” with a fragrant, anointing oil poured over them. Psalm 133:2. The oil represented the Holy Spirit coming upon them to equip them to fulfill their offices. Prophets also used oil to consecrate or “*anoint*” kings and prophets to their offices. 1 Samuel 16:13

Olive oil was burned in oil lamps for *light*, much like our forefathers used kerosene lamps. The lampstand in the tabernacle of Moses had 7 oil lamps that gave light in the temple. Exodus 25:31-40. The Holy Spirit gives us light when we enter God’s temple in praise and prayer and as He reveals the Word of God to us.

Oil is *absorbed* into the skin and likewise the Holy Spirit is absorbed into our lives and becomes part of us. Oil was also used as a cosmetic and a hairdressing. (Receiving the Holy Spirit makes us look younger and better.) Matthew 6:17

Oil was also used as *medicine*. The New Testament elders are to anoint the sick with oil as they pray over them. It’s not the oil that does the healing but the power of the Spirit. James 5:14-15

Dove: When Jesus was baptized in water, the Holy Spirit came upon Him in the spiritual form of a Dove. Matthew 3:16-17. A dove is a gentle, harmless bird that was considered pure enough to be used in sacrifice. Birds have wings that move air, creating a wind-like effect. If the Holy Spirit as a Dove hovered over you, you might feel the effect as a wind or light breeze upon your cheek or *within* your spirit.

4. The Bible refers to various aspects of the Holy Spirit’s personality, including His intellect, will, and emotions. He...

- A. Has a Mind, Rom 8:27
- B. Has a Will, I Cor. 12:11
- C. Has Love, Rom 15:30
- D. Can be grieved, Eph. 4:30, Isa 63:10 5.
- E. Can be tested, Acts 5:9
- F. Speaks, Acts 10:19, 1 Tim. 4:1, Rev. 2:7, 11, 17 (etc.), 22:17
- G. Comforts, Acts 9:31
- H. Forbids, Acts 16:6-7
- I. Chooses, Acts 13:2
- J. Has an opinion, Acts 15:28
- K. Searches, Knows, Teaches, Reveals, I Cor. 2:10-13
- L. Cannot be directed or taught, Isa 40:13