

Th123 A Study of the Holy Spirit

Th123-2 Knowing the Holy Spirit

Have you ever wondered if you would like a person whom you have just met? As you spent more time with the person, however, you grew to love and highly respect them. That is how it should be with the Holy Spirit. The better you know Him, the more you will come to love and honor Him.

In the last lesson, you learned that the Holy Spirit is God. He is the “Third Person of the Trinity.” You also learned that, because the Holy Spirit is a person, you can know Him and live in relationship with Him. The more we know about the Spirit, the better we can know Him personally. One way the Bible reveals the Holy Spirit is through His names. Another way is through the symbols it uses to describe Him. Let’s look at each of these ways.

The Holy Spirit is given many names and titles in Scripture. By reflecting on these names and titles, we can better understand His nature and work. Let’s look at five of the important names given to the Spirit:

First, the Bible calls Him the *Holy Spirit*. It uses this name 94 times, more than any other name. This name reminds us that God’s Spirit is indeed *holy*. This means that He is utterly and totally untainted by sin and evil. The Spirit is the One who enables believers to live Christ-like, holy lives, fully dedicated to the service of God.

Second, the Holy Spirit is called the *Spirit of God*. This name is used 25 times. By calling Him the Spirit of *God*, the Bible is emphasizing His deity. He is, in fact, the Spirit who is God.

Third, the Holy Spirit is sometimes called the *Spirit of Christ*, or the “Spirit of Jesus.” This name reminds us of the Spirit’s close relationship to Christ and His redemptive work. The Spirit is the One who anointed Jesus to fulfill His ministry. And He is the one who empowers believers to be Christ’s witnesses “to the ends of the earth” (Acts 1:8).

Fourth, The Bible refers to the Holy Spirit as the *Spirit of Truth*. Speaking of the Holy Spirit, Jesus said, “When the Spirit of truth comes, he will guide you into all truth” (John 16:13). As the Spirit of Truth, the Holy Spirit is the One who revealed Scripture to the prophets and apostles (2Peter 1:21). He will also guide us in understanding the truth found in Scripture.

Fifth, Jesus called the Holy Spirit the *Helper*. He said, “I will ask the Father, and he will give you another Helper, to be with you forever” (John 14:16, ESV). The Holy Spirit is thus the One who “comes alongside” believers to help, comfort, enable, and empower them to do God’s will.

Just as the Scriptures use many names to describe the Holy Spirit, they also use many symbols to do the same. Let’s look at six of them:

First, the Bible describes the Holy Spirit as a *blowing wind* (John 3:8; Acts 1:2). Jesus told Nicodemus, “The wind blows wherever it pleases....So it is with everyone born of the Spirit” (John 3:8). On the Day of Pentecost, the Spirit came as a sound from heaven “like the blowing of a violent wind” (Acts 2:2). Just as the wind is powerful and unable to be controlled, so is the almighty Spirit of God. He goes wherever He chooses, to fulfill God’s mission.

Second, the Bible pictures the Holy Spirit as a *blazing fire*. John the Baptist introduced Jesus as the one who baptizes “with the Holy Spirit and with fire” (Luke 3:16). Then, on the Day of Pentecost, the Holy Spirit came as “tongues of fire” and sat on the head of each of the 120 disciples (Acts 2:3). The Spirit is the One who will set our tongues aflame to proclaim the gospel to the ends of the earth.

Third, the Bible depicts the Holy Spirit as a *pouring rain*. The prophet Joel said that God would one day pour out His Spirit on all flesh as “rains” and “abundant showers” (Joel 2:23). That outpouring began at Pentecost and will continue until Jesus comes again. On that Day of Pentecost, Peter announced, “This is what was spoken by the prophet Joel: ‘In the last days, God says, I will pour out my Spirit on all people’” (Acts 2:16-17). Now, since the Day of Pentecost, the Heavenly Father will give the Holy Spirit to anyone who will ask in faith (Luke 11:13).

Fourth, the Bible pictures the Holy Spirit as a *flowing river*. Speaking of the Spirit, Jesus promised that the Spirit would one day flow through His followers as “rivers of living water” (John 7:38, ESV). Believers are not to be containers of the Spirit. They are rather to be channels through which the Spirit flows, giving life and blessing to others.

Fifth, the Holy Spirit is compared with *anointing oil*. In the Old Testament, prophets, priests, and kings were anointed with oil. This anointing indicated that the Spirit of the Lord had authorized and enabled them to fulfill their calling. When Jesus began His ministry, He spoke of how the Spirit of the Lord was upon Him, anointing Him to accomplish His mission (Luke 4:18-19). John reminded his audience that they had “an anointing from the Holy One” (1John 2:20). Today, when we are baptized in the Holy Spirit, He anoints and enables us to do God’s work.

Finally, throughout Scripture the Holy Spirit is described as the outstretched *hand (or finger) of God*. Ezekiel described the Spirit’s coming upon him as “the hand of the Lord” (Ezek 37:1). In the New Testament, the powerful working of the Holy Spirit is sometimes described as the hand (or finger) of God. For instance, Jesus cast out demons “by the finger of God” (Luke 11:20). And the “hand of the Lord” was with the Christians in Antioch empowering them to reach the lost (Acts 11:21). Today, the Spirit of the Lord still wants to stretch out His hand and work through His people, just as He did in the Book of Acts (Acts 4:30-31).

This lesson is **important** because it teaches us that God, the Holy Spirit, is represented by many names and symbols in the Bible.

The **main truth** of this lesson is that the person of the Holy Spirit empowers us today to do God’s work in our neighborhoods—to heal and perform miraculous signs and wonders through the name of Jesus.

Let's now **review** some important truths we have learned from this lesson.

1. In this lesson we learned some of the important names or titles used in the Bible to describe the Holy Spirit. Name five of those titles: [PAUSE]
 - A. If you answered, "The Holy Spirit, the Spirit of God, the Spirit of Christ, the Spirit of Truth, and the Helper," you answered correctly.

2. Jesus once called the Spirit of God the "Helper." What does this title tell us about the Spirit's work? [PAUSE]
 - A. If you answered that, as the Helper, the Holy Spirit "comes alongside" believers to help, comfort, and empower them to do God's will, you are right.

3. In this lesson we learned that the Bible also uses certain symbols to describe the Holy Spirit. Name six of those symbols. [PAUSE]
 - A. If you answered that the Bible describes the Holy Spirit as a blowing wind, a blazing fire, a pouring rain, a flowing river, anointing oil, and the hand (or finger) of God, you answered correctly.

Your **assignment** is to re-listen to this lesson several times until you can repeat five names and six symbols of the Holy Spirit and you can teach these truths to others.