



# Life in the Spirit!

# 18. The Holy Spirit of the Trinity {Mat.  
28:18-20}

Oakland International Fellowship

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# What is Your Next Port?





**“.... in the name of the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit,” (Mat.28:19)**

- Although we have looked at the Holy Spirit from various aspects thus far, it is worthy to aim at a holistic biblical perspective of the Spirit’s being and his glorious work in order to better contemplate and worship the Living God. The Trinity is one of the most mysterious topics. Comprehending the Holy Spirit in the Trinity, invisible and wholly unlike ourselves, has perplexed the best thinkers of the human race down to our present generation.



# The Triune God Works As One

- In the **7<sup>th</sup> question** of the larger catechism of the Westminster Standards it asks, “**What is God?**” The answer is concise: “God is a Spirit, in and of himself infinite in being, glory, blessedness, and perfection; all-sufficient, eternal, unchangeable, incomprehensible, everywhere present, almighty, knowing all things, most wise, most holy, most just, most merciful and gracious, longsuffering, and abundant in goodness and truth.”



# The Triune God Works As One

- After stating in the **8<sup>th</sup> question** that, “There is but one only, the living and true God”, it moves on to explain in the **9<sup>th</sup> question** that, “There be three persons in the Godhead, the Father, the Son and the Holy Ghost; and these three are one true, eternal God, the same in substance, equal in power and glory, although distinguished by their personal properties.”



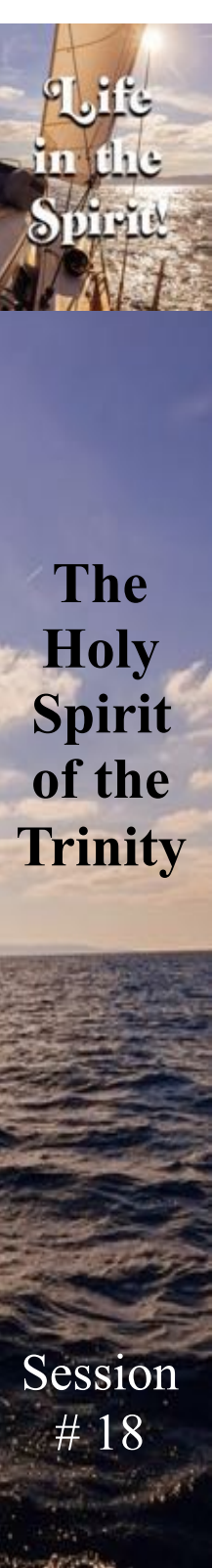
# The Triune God Works As One

- That leads the writers to ask the natural question, “What are the personal properties of the three persons in the Godhead?” (**Question 10**). The answer again is succinct: “It is proper to the Father to beget the Son, and to the Son to be begotten of the Father, and to the Holy Ghost to proceed from the Father and the Son from all eternity.”



# The Triune God Works As One

- Finally, the catechism approaches the question of, “How does it appear that the Son and the Holy Ghost are God equal with the Father? The catechism continues to rely on the witness of the Bible stating, “The scriptures manifest that the Son and the Holy Ghost are God equal with the Father, ascribing unto them such names, attributes, works and worship, as are proper to God only.” (**Question 11**).



## Early church history views of the Trinity.

- ❑ Sub-ordination within God: making the 3 persons of the Godhead different in rank.
- ❑ Consecutive modes: Father, Son & H.S. were 3 manifestations successively assumed by the Godhead.
- ❑ God is a unity but not a Triune God --- Monotheism
- ❑ God is a trinity but not a unity --- Tritheism.

## Trinity formulation by 4<sup>th</sup> century Councils

- ❖ **Council of Nicea** (325AD) affirmed that the Father and the Son were co-essential.
- ❖ **Council of Constantinople** (381AD) fully affirmed the deity of the H.S. Relationship in the Godhead (3 in 1): The Son generated by the Father and the H.S proceeding from the Father and the Son.



# Personality of the Triune God

- God is tri-personal, where-as man is created a uni-personal being. Personality always exists in relation to other persons.

“For in him (Christ) the whole fullness of deity dwells (Col.2:9). “He (the Son) is the radiance of the glory of God, the exact imprint of his nature ...” (Heb.1:3)

- Plurality of fullness: the self-conscious, self-communing, self-contemplating nature of God requires God to be multi-personal. This does not result from God’s choice, but rather it is a necessary characteristic of God. (Gen.1:26)

“Let us make man in our image, after our likeness....”



# Personality of the Triune God

## **O.T. indications or traces of the plurality of God**

- in the work of CREATION,
- in the work of PROVIDENCE and
- in the work of REDEMPTION

## **N.T. gives clearer evidence for God's Triune nature.**

- ❖ In the O.T. God is Redeemer and Savior,
  - N.T. the Son of God takes on this capacity
- ❖ In the O.T. God Jehovah dwells among his people,
  - N.T. the Holy Spirit that dwells in the church
- ❖ N.T. incarnation of the Son makes clear that God had sent his Son into the world and in the outpouring of the H.S. that the Father and the Son sent the Spirit
- ❖ Also, Father & Son commune and H.S. intercedes



# Statements of the Doctrine of the Trinity

- “There is in the Divine Being but one indivisible essence.”
- “In this one Divine Being there are three Persons or individual subsistences; Father, Son and H.S.”
- “The whole undivided essence of God belongs equally to each of the three persons.”
- “The subsistence and operation of the three persons in the Divine Being is marked by a certain definite order.”
- “There are certain personal attributes by which the three persons are distinguished.”
- “The Church confesses the Trinity to be a mystery beyond the comprehension of man.”

\*\*\* {Select material of Systematic Theology - Berkhof}

# Section 1: Christian Beginnings



“So is everyone who is born  
of the Spirit.” (John 3:8)



# #1 Life & Belief”- Christian Beginnings

**Goal:** to define boundaries as we better understand the person and work of the Holy Spirit.

*“If we live by the Spirit, let us also walk by the Spirit”* (Gal.5:25),

- We studied how to distinguish the difference between the H.S. and false spirits that seek to mislead true believers.
- ... learned that the Holy Spirit searches out and reveals all things, indeed the deep things about God.
- ... considered how the H.S. enables us to take on the *“mind of Christ”*, giving us discernment of things natural and supernatural, things worldly and spiritual.
- ... reflected that the H.S. works in us a conviction of sin, of righteousness, and of God’s severe and just judgment.
- ... contemplated how the H.S. is active in the new birth, as we receive God’s presence and power.
- ... and pondered how the H.S. brings assurance of salvation, taking us through life’s joys and trials, providing all things necessary to know that we belong to God.

# Section 2: Christian Growth



“So is everyone who is born of the Spirit.” (John 3:8)



## #2 “Strength & Dedication” Christian Growth

**Goal:** to focus upon how the H.S. of God leads, sanctifies, fills and teaches us to walk and be pleasing in his sight.

- We studied about bearing fruit in all we do, so that we might not resist the H.S.
- ... learned that ‘In Christ’ we have become the holy temple of God, set apart by the H.S. to believe and bring glory to the living God.
- ... considered how we have been called into action, spiritually born for battle. As flesh wars against the Spirit the H.S. teaches us how to **“*crucify the flesh with its passion and desires*”** (Gal.5:24-25).
- ... contemplated what it means to be equipped to do God’s will, as we are **“*filled with the Holy Spirit*”** (Eph.5:18). The H.S. keeps us in balance of right relationship to the law of God, fearing the Lord and walking in his wisdom.
- ... and we were recapped that it is the H.S. who reveals, reminds and takes us into a deeper walk with Christ, **“*into all the truth*”** (Jn.14:26).

**“into**

# Section 3: Christian Service

3



“Let us also walk by the Spirit”  
(Gal 5:25).

## #3 Faith & Filling - Christian Service.

- We discovered the power and mystery of the H.S. as it inspired and guided over 40 authors of the O.T. and N.T. to preserve for us the word of God down through the ages. The Holy Spirit use weak, fallible human beings; to provide the church with a fully trustworthy spiritual guide for all matters of faith and practice (1 Pet.1:10-12).
- ... considered how the Holy Spirit continually sends out the church into missions, and reveals God's plan along the way in building his kingdom, working especially through the local witness of Christians.
- ... envisioned that the Holy Spirit equips the church with many gifts, manifestations of the Holy Spirit to be used for the "***common good***" of the body of Christ.
- ... and reflected on the gifts given to the church to graciously grow up to maturity in "***the fullness of Christ***". Though a variety of gifts are operative in our day, they must be used with great care, so as not to lose sight of the goal; "***that in everything God may be glorified through Jesus Christ***" (1 Pet.4:10-11).

# Section 4: Christian Doctrine



“If I do not go away, the Helper shall not come to you” (John 16:7).



## # 4 Questions & Theology Christian Doctrine

- We considered the anointing of the H.S. that is like “*rivers of living water*” flowing out from the human heart (**John 7:37-39**). This anointing provides us knowledge of the truth, and teaches us how to abide in Christ, how we are sealed and how to be empowered to live out God’s will.
- ... looked again at the distinct ways that the Holy Spirit’s worked in the N.T, and saw how in God’s time, believers reap the blessing of an eternal harvest, bearing everlasting fruit (**Jn.15:7-8**).
- ... pondered our Lord Jesus Christ’s promise to send a personal “*Helper*” (the “*Advocate*” or “*Counselor*”) to be with us forever, reminding us of our Lord’s teaching and enabling us to walk in a manner pleasing to God.
- ...and we finally meditated on the attribute and nature of the Holy Spirit as an integral member of the Trinity, applying benefits of what Jesus Christ accomplished to the church. The Trinity remains a mystery, yet we can embrace by faith what we cannot even begin to fathom.



Life  
in the  
Spirit!

The  
Holy  
Spirit  
of the  
Trinity

Session  
# 18

## Discussion Questions

1. What is the most significant thing that you have learned through this 18 week study on the Holy Spirit?
2. Share together some of the fresh ways you have experienced God's Holy Spirit at work in your life.