

BASIC BIBLE PRINCIPLES

THE HOLY SPIRIT

*“ . . . ye have purified your souls in obeying the truth through the Spirit . . . being born again, not of corruptible seed, but of incorruptible, by the word of God, which liveth and abideth for ever”
(1 Pet. 1:22,23).*

“ . . . God hath from the beginning chosen you to salvation through sanctification of the Spirit and belief of the truth: whereunto He called you by our gospel, to the obtaining of the glory of our Lord Jesus Christ” (2 Thess. 2:13,14).

*“There is one body, and one Spirit, even as ye are called in one hope of your calling . . .”
(Eph. 4:4).*

God's Spirit

God's Spirit is His power by which He achieves all His purposes.

By His Spirit, God:

- Created all things *Gen. 1:1,2; Ps. 33:6; Rev. 4:11*
- Gives life to all creatures *Ps. 104:30; Job 34:14,15*
- Communicated His purpose through His prophets *2 Tim. 3:16; Deut. 18:18; Num. 12:6,7*
- Empowers and equips His angels to carry out His purposes *Ps. 104:4; 103:20*
- Revealed His character through
 - His inspired revelation in both Old and New Testaments *2 Pet. 1:19,21; Eph. 3:5*
 - His work with Israel *Isa. 63. 7-14*
 - His Son Jesus the Christ *Jno. 14:9; Acts 10:38*

The Holy Spirit

This description of God's Spirit occurs almost exclusively in the New Testament. The Holy Spirit is God's Spirit directed particularly to His work of salvation in Jesus, which may be described as 'the new creation in Christ Jesus' (Gal. 6:15; 2 Cor. 5:17; both RV mg.). Although referred to in a personal sense, the Holy Spirit is not a person, but God's power active through His Son, His apostles and His prophets in the first century, and through continuing angelic ministration (Acts 10:38; Eph. 3:5; 1 Cor. 14:29,30; Isa; 63:9,10).

Through the Holy Spirit, God:

- Caused the conception of His Son *Lk. 1:31,35; Mt. 1:18,20*
- Equipped His Son for his ministry *Jno. 3:34,35; Acts 2:22; Lk. 4:14,18-21 (citing Isa. 61:1,2); Acts 10:38*
- Equipped His apostles
 - to preach the gospel *Acts 1:8; 1 Pet. 1:12*
 - to perform miraculous signs *Acts 5:12; Heb. 2:4*
 - to witness against unrepentant Jewry *Jno. 14:26; 15:26; 16:8-14*

- Raised His Son, Jesus, from the dead
- Granted various gifts to apostles and believers in the first century to ensure the establishment of the ecclesia and the completion of His written revelation

1 Pet. 3:18; Eph. 1:19,20; 2 Cor. 13:4

Eph. 4:7-16

Holy Spirit gifts

These gifts were given to individuals at specific times in history: at the Exodus, during the prophetic ministries of Elijah and Elisha, during Jesus's ministry, and during the ministry of the apostles of Jesus to first-century believers, commencing with the initial outpouring at Pentecost (Acts 2). The powers varied, and were given to individuals for specific purposes at specific times (Eph. 4:7,11,12; 1 Cor. 12:4-11).

These gifts were a temporary dispensation for the two contemporary generations, "you, and . . . your children" (Acts 2:38,39) of Jews and Gentiles called to salvation. They were given to establish the first-century community of believers (the ecclesia) and allow the completion of the New Testament revelation (Eph. 4:7-14; 1 Cor. 13:8-10). Neither these gifts, nor any additional grace through the Holy Spirit, offered direct Divine influence to improve the believer's character or to help in overcoming sin, nor were either necessary before a person could believe the gospel (Acts 8:12,15-17; Rom. 6:17).

Apostles with these powers had "tasted the powers of the age to come" (Heb. 6:4,5), having received "the firstfruits of the Spirit" (Rom 8:23). The full harvest comes in the new age of the Kingdom of God when there will be a greater outpouring to equip saints for their role as godly rulers (Joel 2:28-32).

This ministry of the Spirit through apostles and prophets in the first century produced the New Testament revelation, which is wholly sufficient for directing people to, and instructing them in, the way of salvation through faith in Christ Jesus (2 Tim. 3:16,17; Col. 1:28). The Word of God, given through the Spirit to "holy men of God" (2 Pet. 1:21), when sincerely believed is able to create in a person "the mind of Christ", the spirit of Christ, that is, a new man (Rom. 8:4,9,11,14; Gal. 5:16-18).

God's care for His children

God, as a Father Who gives good things to His children, has provided His care in all generations through the ministry of the angels. These, equipped with Spirit power, carry out His purposes, and in particular are appointed to care for believers (Heb. 1:14; Mt. 18:10; Ps. 34:7; 91:11; Acts 12:7; Gen. 48:16; Dan. 10:13).

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