

“My Spirit”: The Person and Work of the Spirit of God  
and His Place in the New Testament Assembly

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A. Who Is the Spirit of God

The Spirit of God is a distinct person within the Triune God who is equal to God the Father and the Lord Jesus Christ.

1. The Spirit of God is a Person

Holy Spirit is more than a force He is a divine person. He has intellect, emotions, will and the Bible ascribes to Him the actions of a person.

- a. Bible uses the masculine pronoun “he” not “it” to refer to the Spirit.
- b. The Spirit of God has emotions
  - He can be grieved (Eph 4:30; Isa 63:10)
  - He can be blasphemed (Matt 12:31-32)
  - He can be insulted (outraged – ESV) (Heb 10:29)
- c. The Spirit has intelligence - “the mind of the Spirit” (Rom 8:27)
- d. The Spirit has a will
  - He distributes gifts to individual believers “as He wills” (1 Cor 12:11)
  - He directs the activities of believers (Acts 16 – Spirit forbade them to go).
- e. His activities are those of a Person.
  - He speaks - “what the Spirit says to the churches” (Rev 2:7; Acts 8:29)
  - He teaches and guides into all truth (John 16:13)
  - He hears (John 16:13)
  - He forbids (Acts 16:6)
  - He intercedes (Rom 8:27)
  - He leads (Rom 8:14)
  - He reveals (Luke 2:26)
  - He brings things to remembrance (John 14:26)
  - He reproves (John 16:8)
  - He comforts (Acts 9:31) - “the comfort of the Holy Spirit”
  - He strives with men (Gen 6:3)

2. The Spirit of God is Fully God.

The Spirit of God has all of the attributes and characteristics of God.

- a. He is Eternal (Heb 9:14 – the “eternal Spirit”)
- b. He is omnipotent (Luke 1:35 Holy Spirit and God’s power linked)
  - Spirit was involved in Christ’s resurrection (Rom 1:4) Also “made alive in the Spirit”
  - He was involved in creation – (Gen 1:2; Ps 104:30)
  - “Spirit of God has made me, and the breath of the Almighty gives me life” (Job 33:4)
- c. He is omnipresent – that is everywhere at once
  - “whither shall I go from thy Spirit” (Psalm 139:7).
  - He indwells all believers at once.
- d. He is omniscient – all knowing - “So also no one comprehends the thoughts of God except the Spirit of God” (1 Cor 2:10-11).
  - Spirit is able to search hearts of men (Rom 8:27).
- e. Spirit has divine holiness - “the Comforter, who is the Holy Spirit” (John 14:6).
  - He is called “the Spirit of holiness” (Rom 1:4)
- f. His Divine Names – Spirit of God, Spirit of the Lord, Spirit of Christ, The Holy Spirit
- g. He is equated with God
  - By lying to Holy Spirit Ananias lied to God (Acts 5:3-4)
  - Lord Jesus referred to the Spirit as another Comforter – “another” means another of the same kind as the Lord.
  - Paul speaks of the “Lord who is the Spirit” (2 Cor 3:18)
- h. He is the revealer of all truth - “He will guide you into all truth” (John 16:13).
- i. He is from Heaven – “Holy Spirit sent from heaven” (1 Pet 1:12).
- j. He imparts new life – “born of the Spirit” (John 3:8) He is the “Spirit of life” (Rom 8:2)
- k. He is the Author of Scripture (1 Pet 1:10-11; 2 Pet 1:21; Mk 12:36; 2 Sam 23:2; Acts 28:25; Heb 3:7)

## B. Spirit of God in the Old Testament

### 1. Creation

- a. Each Person of the Trinity is involved in the original creation:  
God the Father – “for you created all things, and by your will they existed and were created.” (Rev 4:11)  
Lord Jesus – “For by him all things were created, ...” (Col 1:16)  
Holy Spirit – “When you send forth your Spirit, they are created, and you renew the face of the ground.” (Ps 104:30)
- b. Role of the Holy Spirit in Creation  
At Creation “the Spirit of God was hovering over the face of the waters” (Gen 1:2)  
Idea of “hovering” is idea of brooding. Just as a hen broods over her eggs to bring forth chicks so the Spirit is seen brooding over the original creation to fill the void and bring forth life in its various forms.
- c. When God formed man from the dust of the earth the Spirit of God was involved.  
God breathed into man the breath of life (Gen 2:7)  
“The Spirit of God has made me, and the breath of the Almighty gives me life”. (Job 33:4)  
Hebrew words for breath and Spirit are from the same Hebrew root word.
- d. Spirit of God is involved in feeding and sustaining creation.  
“When you send forth your Spirit, they are created, and you renew the face of the ground.” (Ps 104:30) “they” are the created animals described in Ps 104.

### 2. Empowerment of men for Service.

- a. Spirit of God came upon men in the OT to empower them for service for God.  
Spirit came upon judges, prophets, kings and ordinary men to accomplish specific purposes.  
He often left them after completion of that service (i.e. Samson, Saul).  
Three main expressions used in O.T. – “came upon”, “rested on” and “filled”.  
Othniel – “the Spirit of the Lord came upon him” (Jud 3:10)  
Gideon – “But the Spirit of the LORD clothed Gideon” (Jud 6:34).  
70 Elders – “took some of the Spirit that was on him and put it on the seventy elders. And as soon as the Spirit rested on them” (Num 11:25)  
Samson – “the Spirit of the LORD rushed upon him ... he tore the lion” (Jud 14:6)  
David – “Spirit of the LORD rushed upon David from that day forward” (1 Sam 16:13)  
Bezaleel - “I have filled him with the Spirit of God, with ability and intelligence, with knowledge and all craftsmanship ...” (Ex 31:2)
- b. Three men of whom it was said that the Spirit is in them.  
Joseph – “Can we find a man like this, in whom is the Spirit of God?” (Gen 41:38)  
Joshua - “Take Joshua ... a man in whom is the Spirit” (Num 27:18)  
Ezekiel – “Spirit entered into me” (Ez 2:2).  
All the OT writers - “the Spirit of Christ in them was indicating ...” (1 Pet 2:11)

### 3. Revelation of God’s Truth.

- Spirit of God was particularly involved in the transmission of God’s revelation to Israel.
- a. Spirit was involved in the prophets’ declarations:  
David – “The oracle of David ... the sweet psalmist of Israel: “The Spirit of the LORD speaks by me; his word is on my tongue”. (2 Sam 23:2)
  - b. Inspiration of the scriptures – the words of scriptures were God-breathed (2 Tim 3:16) by the Holy Spirit controlling and influencing human authors so that they recorded the exact words of God.  
2 Pet 1:21 – “men spoke from God as they were carried along by the Holy Spirit”.  
1 Pet 2:11 - “the prophets who prophesied ... enquired carefully ... what the Spirit of Christ in them was indicating ...”  
The NT scriptures identify the words of the OT w/ the Spirit – Mt 22:43; Heb 10:15-18.

### 4. Striving and convicting Mankind.

My Spirit shall not always strive with man” (Gen 6:3).

### 5. Corporate residence within the Nation of Israel.

The Spirit of God dwelt in the midst of the nation.

“My Spirit remains in your midst” (Hag 2:5)

“Then he remembered the days of old, of Moses and his people. Where is he who put in the midst of them his Holy Spirit” (Isa 63:11)

### C. Spirit of God in the Life of Christ

The Lord Jesus lived and died in complete harmony with the Spirit of God.

#### 1. Spirit and the Messiah Foretold

Three major OT passages reveal that the influence of the Spirit of God would be reflected in the Messiah's wisdom (Isa 11), His character (Isa 42) and His service (Isa 61)

"And the Spirit of the LORD shall rest upon him, the Spirit of wisdom and understanding, the Spirit of counsel and might, the Spirit of knowledge and the fear of the LORD" (Isa 11:2)

"Behold my servant, whom I uphold, my chosen, in whom my soul delights; I have put my Spirit upon him" (Isa 42:1)

"The Spirit of the Lord GOD is upon me, because the LORD has anointed me to" (Isa 61:1)

#### 2. Spirit of God involved in His Birth.

"The Holy Spirit will come upon you, and the power of the Most High will overshadow you; therefore the child to be born will be called holy--the Son of God" (Lk 1:35)

#### 3. Spirit of God in the Ministry of Christ.

"he saw the Spirit of God descending like a dove and coming to rest on Him" (Mt 3:16)

"Then Jesus was led up by the Spirit into the wilderness to be tempted" (Mt 4:1)

"But if it is by the Spirit of God that I cast out demons, then the kingdom of God has come upon you" (Mt 12:28)

"And Jesus returned in the power of the Spirit to Galilee" (Lk 4:14)

"For he whom God has sent utters the words of God, for he gives the Spirit without measure" (Jn 3:34)

"In that same hour he rejoiced in the Holy Spirit" (Luke 10:31)

"how God anointed Jesus of Nazareth with the Holy Spirit and with power. He went about doing good" (Act 10:38)

#### 4. Spirit of God in the Death and Resurrection of Christ.

"how much more will the blood of Christ, who through the eternal Spirit offered himself without blemish to God" (Heb 9:14)

"declared to be the Son of God in power according to the Spirit of holiness by his resurrection from the dead" (Rom 1:4)

### D. Spirit of God in the New Testament.

#### 1. New Creation

The Spirit of God is involved in our salvation from conviction to our final redemption in heaven.

##### a. Conviction

Holy Spirit is involved in convicting men of their need of salvation.

"And when he comes, he will convict the world concerning sin and righteousness and judgment" (Jn 16:8)

##### b. Regeneration

"Unless one is born of water and the Spirit, he cannot enter the kingdom of God"

(John 3:5) "So is everyone born of the Spirit" (John 3:8)

"he saved us, not because of works done by us in righteousness, but ... by the washing of regeneration and renewal of the Holy Spirit" (Tit 3:5)

Word regeneration literally a compound word meaning to birth again or new birth.

Regeneration is a one time act of the Spirit whereby a believer is given new life.

"Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation" (2 Cor 5:17).

##### c. Baptism into One Body

At the moment of conversion, every believer is baptized with the Holy Spirit. The baptism of the Holy Spirit was initiated at Pentecost and all who come to trust Christ share in that experience at the moment of regeneration. All believers are baptized into the Body of Christ.

"For in one Spirit we were all baptized into one body--Jews or Greeks, slaves or free-- and all were made to drink of one Spirit" (1 Cor 12:13)

"you will be baptized with the Holy Spirit" (Acts 1:5)

"Repent and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of your sins, and you will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit" (Acts 2:38)

d. Indwelling of the Spirit

At the moment of conversion we are baptized with the Spirit and thereafter are indwelt by the Holy Spirit forever.

“You, however, are not in the flesh but in the Spirit, in fact the Spirit of God dwells in you. Anyone who does not have the Spirit of Christ does not belong to him” (Rom 8:9)

“the Spirit of him who raised Jesus from the dead dwells in you” (Rom 8:11)

“Do you not know that you are God's temple & that God's Spirit dwells in you?” (1 Cor 3:16)

e. Sealing of the Spirit

The Spirit of God indwelling the believer is God's seal on the believer that he or she is God's possession and is a guarantee of the believer's complete redemption.

“In him you also, when you heard the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation, and believed in him, were sealed with the promised Holy Spirit” (Eph 1:13)

“And do not grieve the Holy Spirit of God, by whom you were sealed for the day of redemption” (Eph 4:30)

“who has also put his seal on us and given us his Spirit in our hearts” (2 Cor 1:22).

Word for “seal” is the idea of confirming or impressing.

Two main ideas in the concept of the Spirit sealing us:

(i) Security – like the seal of the Roman emperor (Matt 27:65) – the seal secures something. It guarantees its protection. So the Spirit is the guarantee of our final redemption.

(ii) Ownership – a seal was also use as proof of ownership (Jer 32:10)  
Spirit of God within us is proof of God's ownership of us.

f. Pledge of the Spirit

Spirit of God within the believer is also a pledge or earnest to the believer assuring us of our inheritance to come.

“who has .... given us his Spirit in our hearts as a guarantee”. (2 Cor 1:22)

“were sealed with the promised Holy Spirit, who is the guarantee of our inheritance until we acquire possession of it” (Eph 1:14)

“God, who has given us the Spirit as a guarantee” (2 Cor 5:5).

Pledge carries idea of three things:

(i) A down payment on the purchase.  
Spirit within is the first installment in our inheritance guaranteeing full redemption.

(ii) An obligation to complete the purchase.  
The Spirit represents God's promise to finish the work of redemption.

(ii) A sample of what is to come.  
The Spirit within is a foretaste of the fellowship of heaven.

g. Witnessing of the Spirit

The Holy Spirit within is also a witness within us, assuring us of our salvation.

(i) He witnesses to the completeness and finality of Christ's work of atonement.

“For by a single offering he has perfected for all time those who are being sanctified and the Holy Spirit also bears witness to us” (Heb 10:14-15)

(ii) He bears witness that we have become the children of God.

“The Spirit himself bears witness with our spirit that we are children of God” (Rom 8:16)

(iii) He bears witness to the truth of God.

“When the Spirit of truth comes, he will guide you into all the truth” (Jn 16:13)

2. Empowering Believers to Live and Serve Christ.

a. Fruit of the Spirit

The Spirit of God provides the power for believers to overcome the flesh and live godly lives for God's glory.

“in order that the righteous requirement of the law might be fulfilled in us, who walk not according to the flesh but according to the Spirit” (Rom 8:4)

“walk by the Spirit, and you will not gratify the desires of the flesh” (Gal 5:16)

“the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, self-control” (Gal 5: 22-23)

“And we all ... beholding the glory of the Lord, are being transformed into the same image ... For this comes from the Lord who is the Spirit.” (2 Cor 3:18).

b. Intercession of the Spirit

The Spirit of God intercedes on the believer's behalf in the presence of God.

"Likewise the Spirit helps us in our weakness. For we do not know what to pray for as we ought, but the Spirit himself intercedes for us with groanings too deep for words" (Rom 8:26).

"the Spirit intercedes for the saints according to the will of God" (Rom 8:27)

c. Empowerment of the Spirit

While every believer has the Spirit of God within, the Holy Spirit fills believers for particular acts of service for God.

"be filled with the Spirit" (Eph 5:18) – tense implies to keep on being filled – it is a life-time process.

Being filled with the spirit means the Spirit of God has control over me.

Spirit of God can be grieved by our actions which are inconsistent with His nature.

"do not grieve the Holy Spirit of God" (Eph 4:30)

Grieving implies the presence of love and sorrow – idea of hurting.

Spirit of God can be quenched.

"Do not quench the Spirit" (1 Thess 5:19).

Quenching the Spirit is to put a damper on His power in our lives either by our sin or by failing to maintain fellowship with God.

(i) Power for Speaking

"you will receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you, and you will be my witnesses .... to the end of the earth." (Acts 1:8).

"my speech and my message were not in plausible words of wisdom, but in demonstration of the Spirit and of power" (1 Cor 2:4)

"they were all filled with the Holy Spirit and continued to speak the word of God with boldness" (Acts 4:31)

"Then Peter, filled with the Holy Spirit, said to them" (Acts 4:8)

(ii) Power for Service

"pick out from among you seven men of good repute, full of the Spirit and of wisdom, whom we will appoint to this duty (administration)" (Acts 6:3)

"By the Holy Spirit who dwells within us, guard the good deposit entrusted to you" (2 Tim 1:14)

"he may grant you to be strengthened with power through his Spirit" (Eph 3:16)

(iii) Power for Prayer

"praying at all times in the Spirit" (Eph 6:18)

d. Comfort of the Spirit.

"He will give you another Helper, to be with you forever" (John 14:16)

Word "Helper" – intercessor, consoler, advocate, comforter.

Spirit of God comforts primarily through communicating the truth of God (Jn 14:16; 26; 15:26; 16:7-8).

"by the power of the Holy Spirit you may abound in hope" (Rom 15:13)

3. Revelation of God's Truth

a. Inspiration of NT Scriptures

As in the O.T. the Spirit of God was involved in the inspiration of N.T. Scriptures.

"But the Helper, the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send ... He will teach you all things and bring to your remembrance all that I have said to you" (Jn 14:26)

"All Scripture is breathed out by God" (2 Tim 3:16)

"For it has seemed good to the Holy Spirit and to us to lay on you no greater burden than these requirements" (Act 15:28)

"which was not made known to the sons of men in other generations as it has now been revealed to his holy apostles and prophets by the Spirit" (Eph 3:5)

b. Illumination

The Spirit of God illuminates the word of God to teach us and reveal God to us.

"these things God has revealed to us through the Spirit. For the Spirit searches everything, even the depths of God" (1 Cor 2:10)

"Now we have received not the spirit of the world, but the Spirit who is from God, that we might understand the things freely given us by God" (1 Cor 2:12)

- c. Guiding/Leading of the Spirit  
 The Spirit guides and leads believers in their service for God.  
 “the Holy Spirit testifies to me in every city that imprisonment and afflictions await me” (Acts 20:23)  
 “For all who are led by the Spirit of God are sons of God” (Rom 8:14)  
 “walk by the Spirit, and you will not gratify the desires of the flesh” (Gal 5:16)  
 “And the Spirit said to Philip, “Go over and join this chariot.” (Acts 8:29)  
 “the Holy Spirit said, “Set apart for me Barnabas and Saul for the work” (Acts 13:2)  
 “having been forbidden by the Holy Spirit to speak the word in Asia” (Acts 16:6)
4. The Spirit of God in the World.
- a. Convicting men  
 “And when He comes, He will convict the world concerning sin and righteousness and judgment” (John 16:8)  
 To resist the gospel is to resist the Spirit – “you always resist the Holy Spirit” (Acts 7:51)
- b. Preserving society by restraining sin – (2 Thess 2: 7)
5. Spirit of God in the Assembly  
 The design of a New Testament assembly is uniquely structured to provide the Holy Spirit maximum freedom from human interference in order to bring glory to Christ. New testament assemblies should be characterized by (1) the presidency of the Spirit of God, (2) the functioning of spiritual gifts endowed and empowered by the Spirit (3) corporate worship controlled by the Spirit of God and (4) leadership established and controlled by the Spirit of God.
- a. His role in Gathering an Assembly  
 “For where two or three are gathered in my name, there am I among them.” (Matt 18:20)  
 Spirit of God is the one who gathers believers in assembly to the name of Jesus Christ. The Spirit of God uses the truth of God to impress believers that the assembly is God’s dwelling place. Hence the assembly does not use modern marketing methods to recruit members but rather relies on the Holy Spirit.
- b. Gifts of the Spirit  
 The Spirit of God gives spiritual gifts to each individual believer for the building up of other believers and the salvation of sinners. These gifts are to be empowered by the Spirit of God.  
 “Now there are varieties of gifts, but the same Spirit” (1 Cor 12:4)  
 “To each is given the manifestation of the Spirit for the common good” (1 Cor 12:7)  
 “All these are empowered by one and the same Spirit, who apportions to each one individually as he wills” (1 Cor 12:11)  
 A N.T. assembly recognizes the plurality of gifts. One man ministry fails to recognize and use the plurality of gifts given to the church and denies the Spirit of God his proper place.
- c. He Leads the Worship  
 The Spirit of God’s primary role is to glorify Christ. One of the ways in which He does this is through leading the worship of his saints in the local assembly.  
 “For we are the real circumcision, who worship by the Spirit of God and glory in Christ Jesus and put no confidence in the flesh” (Phil 3:3)  
 “He will glorify me, for he will take what is mine and declare it to you” (John 16:14)  
 “When you come together, each one has a hymn, a lesson, a revelation, a tongue, or an interpretation” (1 Cor 14:26)  
 The assembly worship meeting is unique in that the Spirit of God is able to lead the saints in worship in the way that a human-controlled service would not.
- d. He Establishes Leadership in the Assembly.  
 The Spirit of God raises up leadership in a local assembly.  
 “Pay careful attention to yourselves and to all the flock, in which the Holy Spirit has made you overseers, to care for the church of God” (Acts 20:28)  
 An Assembly does not choose its elders by popular vote but rather relies on the Spirit of God to raise and fit men for that capacity.  
 Elders are not accountable to a church organization but to God and are to rely on the power and leading of the Spirit in shepherding the assembly.