



Goahead Theological Seminary & College

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Holy Spirit

The Holy Spirit (聖靈) refers to one of the three persons (personas) that make up God in the Christian doctrine of the Trinity. However, some argue that the Holy Spirit is not a person within the Trinity, but rather a powerful spirit, or active force, used by God. In the past, it was also called the Holy Spirit, and in the early days of Protestantism, it was also translated as Sumnim. In the Old Testament, it is the Hebrew "Ruach Kodesh" (רוח קודש), in the New Testament, it is the Koine Greek "Pneuma" (πνεῦμα), and in Latin, it is translated as "Spiritus Sanctus."

According to the Acts of the Apostles, the Holy Spirit descended upon the apostles, marking the beginning of full-fledged Christianity. Therefore, the church calendar commemorates the day the Holy Spirit descended and the church began as Pentecost Sunday. The Nicene-Constantinopolitan Creed, professed at the First Council of Constantinople, affirms, "I believe in the Holy Spirit, the Lord, the Giver of Life. He spoke through the prophets and is worshipped and glorified with the Father and the Son." However, the Eastern Orthodox Church confesses that "the Holy Spirit proceeds from the Father," while the Western Church tradition confesses that "the Holy Spirit proceeds from the Father and the Son (Filioque problem)." The intention is the same in that they explain that the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit are the Trinity.

Overview

The Holy Spirit is one of the three persons of the Trinity, and the distinction between the three is primarily evident in their work related to salvation.

- The Father: Plans salvation.
- The Son: Completes the work necessary for salvation. The physical manifestation of the Son is Jesus Christ.
- The Holy Spirit: Applying the grace of salvation accomplished by the Son to those who are to be saved, leading to repentance.

Some tend to think of the Holy Spirit as a force or energy, but this does not follow the general Christian doctrine of the Trinity, which holds that the Holy Spirit is one person with the Father and the Son.



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Detailed Theories by Theological School

Roman Catholic Church

In the Roman Catholic Church, the Holy Spirit is an essential concept, rooted in the belief that "everything in this world happens according to God's will." Because the Catholic Church places such a high value on the Holy Spirit, there's a strong tendency to underestimate individual will and actions, believing that everything ultimately happens according to God's plan. Therefore, some scholars argue that in the artistic activities of Christian culture, such as literature and fine art, the ways in which Christians viewed and understood humanity before and after the Reformation were diametrically opposed. Certainly, the Reformation had a strong influence on human understanding in eastern France (Lyon), western Switzerland (Geneva), and England. However, in other regions, it is generally believed that Renaissance humanism had a significant impact on Christianity.

Pentecost: The Descent of the Holy Spirit

On the 50th day after Jesus' resurrection, the Holy Spirit descended upon his disciples where they were gathered. They were filled with the Holy Spirit and began their missionary work. Therefore, this day is also called the Feast of Pentecost, Pentecost Day, or Pentecost Sunday. In fact, it is considered the founding day of the early Christian church.

- A scene from the Pentecost service by the early church members

When the day of Pentecost had come, they were all together in one place.

- The Apostle Paul hurries to Jerusalem to celebrate Pentecost.

Paul had decided to sail past Ephesus so as not to spend time in Asia, for he was in a hurry to be in Jerusalem by Pentecost, if possible.

- The Apostle Paul hurries to celebrate Pentecost in Ephesus.

I will stay in Ephesus until Pentecost—1 Corinthians 16:8

The Pentecost Sunday lectionary below is based on the Revised Common Lectionary (RCL), currently used by churches worldwide, and does not vary significantly across denominations.

- Acts 2:1-21

- 1 Corinthians 12:4-13



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- **John 20:19-23**
- **Acts 10:44-48**

Dispensationalism

Among Christian theological schools, dispensationalists divide the period before the birth of Christ into the "Age of the Father," when God spoke directly with the Israelites; the period from Christ's birth to his ascension into the "Age of the Son;" and the period from Christ's ascension to the present into the "Age of the Holy Spirit." Because, since God does not directly communicate with humans and Christ has already ascended to heaven, I believe that only the Holy Spirit directly influences humans.

Calvinism

The role of the Holy Spirit, emphasized in Reformed Protestantism, is to apply the benefits of the Son's redemption to believers. There are two main benefits of redemption:

- **Exemption from guilt:** Remission from the penalty for sin. This is based on the belief that the Son bore the punishment in the believer's stead.
- **Liberation from the power of sin:** Relief from the oppression of sinful nature. This is based on the belief that the Son transferred believers from the power of Satan into the kingdom of God.

The above explanation is narrowly defined. "Liberation from the power of sin" broadly encompasses the task of enabling believers to understand and demonstrate the ways of the Kingdom of God. In this context, "the way the Holy Spirit works in believers, as emphasized by Reformed theology," utilizes the believer's own personal activity, rather than external factors like dreams, sounds, or visions. This is called organic operation. At this time, "the Bible alone serves as the standard for determining which of the believer's numerous thoughts aligns with the direction the Holy Spirit leads," is also a key tenet of Reformed thought.

Anglican Holy Spirit

Based on the Nicene-Constantinopolitan Creed, Anglicans believe the Holy Spirit is the giver of life, having spoken through the prophets. They also



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believe that the Holy Spirit is the Lord who guides us into the full truth and enables us to become like Christ. The presence of the Holy Spirit is known when we confess Jesus Christ as Lord and when we live in love and harmony with God, with ourselves, with our neighbors, and with all creation. The complete truth guided by the Holy Spirit is only revealed as truth taught by the Holy Spirit when it is in accord with Scripture.

Father Reuben Archer Torrey, the late Anglican priest and founder of Jesus Abbey, explained the Holy Spirit in a sermon titled "Holiness and Maturity" as follows:

In the Bible, the word "breath" also means the Holy Spirit. The Holy Spirit is the breath of God. The Bible, given to us by the Holy Spirit, is a book with many functions. In addition to communing with God through prayer and the Bible, we must also encounter the church, the body of Christ, that is, our members, in a loving relationship with them. They are not just our neighbors, but our brothers and sisters. Besides them, there are also non-believers who face serious challenges. Jesus tells us that we are doing what we can to show them the Lord's love. It is part of our fellowship with God and, through the help of the Holy Spirit, the foundation for a complete life of holiness and maturity.

Thomas Müntzer's Holy Spirit

German reformer Thomas Müntzer opposed clericalism and argued that the source of truth comes from the Bible. He argued that the source of truth comes from the Holy Spirit. In other words, if the Bible was inspired by the Holy Spirit, then simply feeling the presence of the Holy Spirit was sufficient.

The Attributes of the Holy Ghost

He is a member of the Godhead, composed of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost (see 1 John 5:7; D&C 20:28), and is a "personage of spirit" (D&C 130:22). Although He is in one place at a time, His influence can extend to all things simultaneously.

The Mission of the Holy Ghost

The mission of the Holy Ghost is to bear witness of the Father and the Son and of all truth. The Holy Ghost will testify to us that Jesus is our Savior and



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Redeemer (3 Nephi 28:11; D&C 20:27). He will reveal to us that our Heavenly Father is the Father of our spirits. He will help us know that we can attain eternal glory, just as our Father has (Romans 8:16–17). The Lord's prophets have promised, "By the power of the Holy Ghost ye may know the truth of all things" (Moroni 10:5).

Sacraments Related to the Holy Spirit

Among the sacraments related to the Holy Spirit is Confirmation (a ceremony of confirmation, not a sacrament in Protestant churches). Confirmation, or initiation, is a sacrament in which those baptized as infants confirm their faith as adults and confirm the presence of the Holy Spirit. This ceremony also involves anointing the forehead with oil. It is performed by some Protestant denominations (Anglican, Lutheran, Methodist, and some Presbyterian churches), the Roman Catholic Church, and the Eastern Orthodox Church. Historically, it originated in the early church, when baptized believers were blessed by being anointed with oil, as if they were newborn babies.