

The Person

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Holy Spirit / God: Trinity; Person; Holy Spirit / John 14:16

How to Understand the 3rd Person of the Godhead

“Without the Spirit of God, we can do nothing. We are as ships without the wind, branches without sap, and like coals without fire, we are useless.”—Charles Spurgeon

- The Series
 - **The Person**
 - 3rd person of the Godhead
 - **The Promise**
 - Promise Jesus gave as he left
 - **Pentecost**
 - What happened at Pentecost
 - **The Past**
 - SDA history and the Holy Spirit
 - **The Punchline**
 - The experience of the Latter Rain
- Today:
 - **The Person**
- The Holy Spirit
 - is the most
 - confused topic
 - aspect of the Godhead.
- Trinity
 - not in Bible
 - definition
 - Tri
 - Unity
- There are many things
 - we cannot understand
 - about God.
- For example
 - His pre-existence
 - His omnipotence
 - The incarnation
 - Even simply - His Love

- These are questions
 - we will have
 - for eternity.
- There are things
 - you cannot fully answer.
- So lets focus
 - on what we do know
 - about the Holy Spirit.
- Third Person of the Godhead.
- Let's go back
 - to the beginning:

Genesis 1:26 ESV

Then God said, "Let us make man in our image, after our likeness. And let them have dominion over the fish of the sea and over the birds of the heavens and over the livestock and over all the earth and over every creeping thing that creeps on the earth."

- I want to focus
 - on the first 5 words.
 - "The God said, "Let Us..."
- The word us
 - is a plural personal pronoun
- Accordingly,
 - first thing we know
 - about God:
- God is plural
- Actually,
 - lets God back earlier

Genesis 1:1 ESV

In the beginning, God created the heavens and the earth.

- Again,
 - looking at first few words.
 - "In the beginning, God"
- The OT was written in Hebrew.

- This is the Hebrew Word

אלהים

- What is so interesting
 - about this word:
 - It is a plural noun.
- In English
 - how do you know
 - when a noun is plural?
- We put an “s” on the end.
- Hebrew is similar.
 - they have a plural ending.

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- All words
 - that end with
 - plural!
- The very first verse
 - says God is plural.
- You may ask.
 - Well,
 - why does our bible
 - translate it as
 - “God”
 - singular?
- Good question,
 - and now I think
 - we are beginning
 - to reach a point
 - that is a bit
 - mysterious.
- The Bible teaches that God
 - is both One
 - and Three.
- Let me show you:

Deuteronomy 6:4 ESV

“Hear, O Israel: The LORD our God, the LORD is one.

- Famous verse.
 - All young Jews
 - required to memorize.
 - “Shema”
- Seems to say,
 - God is one.
- Let’s look at a different verse.

Matthew 28:19 ESV

Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit,

- Here,
 - Bible seems to make clear
 - three persons of God.
- Do these verses contradict?
- Christians have been
 - confused on this for
 - millennia.
- **Modalism**
 - explanations
- Let me share one verse
 - that will clarify
 - this apparent
 - misconception.

Genesis 2:24 ESV

Therefore a man shall leave his father and his mother and hold fast to his wife, and they shall become one flesh.

- One of the gifts
 - Adam and Eve
 - before the fall
 - Oneness.
- Explain this to me:
 - Literally one?
- Were they 2 people
 - or one person?
- So you are saying

- it is like a metaphor.
- What does the metaphor mean?
- In the same way
 - God is one?
- Clearly,
 - that is what Jesus means
 - in this passage:

John 14:8–9 ESV

Philip said to him, “Lord, show us the Father, and it is enough for us.” Jesus said to him, “Have I been with you so long, and you still do not know me, Philip? Whoever has seen me has seen the Father. How can you say, ‘Show us the Father’?”

- Let’s look at another verse:
- Before Jesus left
 - this earth
 - He wanted to give
 - his disciples
 - greatest gift:

John 14:16–17 ESV

And I will ask the Father, and he will give you another Helper, to be with you forever, even the Spirit of truth, whom the world cannot receive, because it neither sees him nor knows him. You know him, for he dwells with you and will be in you.

- Pay attention
 - to this verse.
- Who is speaking?
 - Jesus.
- Okay,
 - Jesus - son of God
 - says:
 - “I will ask the Father...”
- Ponder this with me...
 - If they are
 - literally
 - physically
 - ONE

- why would He
 - need to ask himself
 - for something?
- But it gets better...
- What does Jesus
 - ask the Father for?
- He asks to give them
 - a special outpouring
 - of the person
 - of the Holy Spirit!
- Clearly 3 persons.
 - The Son
 - Asking the Father
 - To send the gift
 - of the Holy Spirit!
- Adam and Eve's relationship
 - in the Garden
 - before sin
 - are an apt example
 - of the Trinity.
- They were one.
- God is one
- Also,
 - they were equal.

Genesis 2:18 ESV

Then the LORD God said, "It is not good that the man should be alone; I will make him a helper fit for him."

- What does that
 - phrase mean
 - "fit for him?"
- This verse implies
 - comparable,
 - like a mate
 - or partner.
- Notice also:

Genesis 2:21–22 ESV

So the LORD God caused a deep sleep to fall upon the man, and while he slept took one of his ribs and closed

up its place with flesh. And the rib that the LORD God had taken from the man he made into a woman and brought her to the man.

- What part
 - did God take?
- Rib
 - Why?
- Not head
- Not foot
- To stand side by side.
- Now a little controversial topic:
- Notice when
 - male headship began:
- After fall
 - God speak to Eve:

Genesis 3:16 ESV

To the woman he said, “I will surely multiply your pain in childbearing; in pain you shall bring forth children. Your desire shall be contrary to your husband, but he shall rule over you.”

- One consequence of sin,
 - is that Eve was subjected
 - to her husband.
- This was done
 - as a means of protection
 - for the family
 - but has been abused.
- This is a controversial topic
 - and it happens
 - subject of Wed
 - prayer meeting.
 - Come study.
- Adam and Eve
 - before the fall
 - were similar to God.

- They were
 - one
 - equal
- But
 - Not the same
 - Had different roles
- Men are stronger
- Women are more nurturing
- Physiologically
 - Only women can breastfeed
 - etc.
- We were created
 - to compliment each other
 - to be equal
- Not to be the same...
- Traditionally
 - Men and Women
 - fulfilled different roles
- And it seems to be
 - that was God's
 - intended will.
- Same is true
 - with the Godhead.
- They fulfill
 - different roles.

Different Roles

1 Peter 1:1–2 ESV

Peter, an apostle of Jesus Christ,
 To those who are elect exiles of the Dispersion in
 Pontus, Galatia, Cappadocia, Asia, and Bithynia,
 according to the foreknowledge of God the Father, in
 the sanctification of the Spirit, for obedience to Jesus
 Christ and for sprinkling with his blood:
 May grace and peace be multiplied to you.

- They all fulfill
 - different roles
 - in the plan of Salvation.

- Jesus - he sacrifice
- Holy Spirit - work of Sanctification
- Father - ???
- Some say Father
 - overseer...
 - can be confusing...
- Jesus and Spirit
 - below Father on
 - Hierarchy.
- I believe this is wrong
 - But I see some verses
 - that seem to suggest this
 - at first glance.
- One person subservient to the other?

John 14:28 ESV

You heard me say to you, 'I am going away, and I will come to you.' If you loved me, you would have rejoiced, because I am going to the Father, for the Father is greater than I.

- Jesus often says
 - stuff like this
 - when on earth
 - as a human.
- He must ask the Father
 - to do things for Him.
- That is because
 - while on earth
 - he was human.
- God in human flesh.

| Two Boys Go to Fair

- Jesus was equal with Father
 - in heaven
 - but when He became
 - human things changed.

Philippians 2:5–8 ESV

Have this mind among yourselves, which is yours in Christ Jesus, who, though he was in the form of God, did not count equality with God a thing to be grasped, but

emptied himself, by taking the form of a servant, being born in the likeness of men. And being found in human form, he humbled himself by becoming obedient to the point of death, even death on a cross.

- It says,
 - Jesus was equal with Father
- But,
 - when He became human,
 - He became a servant...
- Some have taught
 - Son and Spirit
 - below Father.
- This is not a matter
 - of hierarchy but
 - rather roles.
- Like Adam and Eve
 - before fall
 - Equal
 - Different
- Their roles don't
 - make them
 - above or
 - below.
- In Godhead
 - they have roles
 - some seem more humble.
- But none
 - are below.
- They are
 - equal.
- One last verse,
 - as Jesus was teaching
 - His equality with Father,
 - Jews understood
 - tried to kill him
 - accusing him of
 - blasphemy.

I and the Father are one.”

The Jews picked up stones again to stone him. Jesus answered them, “I have shown you many good works from the Father; for which of them are you going to stone me?” The Jews answered him, “It is not for a good work that we are going to stone you but for blasphemy, because you, being a man, make yourself God.” Jesus answered them, “Is it not written in your Law, ‘I said, you are gods’? If he called them gods to whom the word of God came—and Scripture cannot be broken— do you say of him whom the Father consecrated and sent into the world, ‘You are blaspheming,’ because I said, ‘I am the Son of God’?

- Jesus does not recant
 - of His equality with Father
- rather, stands in the face
 - of those ready to kill Him
 - to teach this truth.
- While here,
 - lets address
 - one last heresy.
- Many believe Jesus
 - did not exist
 - as such
 - before the incarnation
 - or came into being
 - at sometime in
 - ancient past
 - But has not always
 - been with the Father.
- To support this
 - they quote verses like:

Colossians 1:15 ESV

He is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn of all creation.

- First born...?
 - hapax legomenon
- It could mean
 - first in pre-immanence!

- Clearly Jesus existed before incarnation:
 - Look at next verse:

Colossians 1:16 ESV

For by him all things were created, in heaven and on earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones or dominions or rulers or authorities—all things were created through him and for him.

- He was an active
 - participant in
 - the creation
 - as we already discussed.
- But let us address
 - the confusion
 - about Jesus being
 - brought into
 - existence by the Father.
- Jesus Plainly Said:

John 8:58 ESV

Jesus said to them, “Truly, truly, I say to you, before Abraham was, I am.”

- I AM is
 - present tense
 - “to be” verb
- I AM means:
 - I was,
 - I am,
 - I will be.
- It means
 - He was not
 - dependent on
 - anything or anyone
 - else to come into existence.

Christ is the pre-existent, self-existent Son of God.... In speaking of his pre-existence, Christ carries the mind back through dateless ages. He assures us that there never was a time when He was not in close fellowship with the eternal God. He to whose voice the Jews were

then listening had been with God as one brought up with Him. - Evangelism p. 615

- All 3 persons
 - have always been
 - and are equal.
- And yet,
 - we reach again
 - a mystery.
- We cannot fully grasp
 - pre-existence
 - because we know nothing
 - of the sort.
- So,
 - we simply,
 - accept it by faith.

Why

- Why is this important?
 - Few Reasons
- First,
 - understand God
- Second,
 - understand gift of HS.
- Third,
 - understand personhood.
 - HS uses us
 - We don't use HS.
 - We grieve HS.
 - etc.

“What the Church needs today is not more machinery or better, not new organizations or more novel methods, but men whom the Holy Ghost can use—men of prayer, men mighty in prayer.”—E.M. Bounds

Summary

1. There are 3 Persons in the Godhead.
2. They are perfectly united as one.
3. They have different Roles.
4. But they are equal as such.

5. All 3 have always existed.