



SESSION 1: Who or what is the Holy Spirit?

1. The Holy Spirit is a person – not just a power!

- **He has opinions.** Read Acts 15:24-28 again. How do you think the leaders of the Early Church became aware of how the Spirit was feeling about these issues?
- **He speaks to us.** In John 14:26 Jesus promised that the Spirit would teach his followers and remind them of the things that Jesus had said. One way the Holy Spirit speaks to us today is through **the Bible – the Word of God**. The Spirit also speaks directly to our spirits (Romans 8:16) telling us that we belong to God. How do you feel that the Spirit speaks to you?
- **He leads people.** Look at Romans 8:14 again. Do you feel that the Holy Spirit has led you? If so, how?
- **He has feelings.** In Ephesians 4:30 Paul warns us not to grieve the Holy Spirit. The fruit of the Spirit in Galatians chapter 5 also includes emotions such as love, joy and peace etc. An impersonal power doesn't have feelings!

So, if this Holy Spirit is a person, then what kind of person is He?

2. The Holy Spirit is divine – He is God!

The Holy Spirit is the third person in the Trinity, co-equal and co-eternal with the Father and the Son. There is God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Spirit, but these are not three gods but one!

These divine attributes mean that:

- The Spirit is all powerful.
- The Spirit is all knowing.
- The Spirit is present everywhere.

3. The Holy Spirit inspired the scriptures

In 2 Timothy 3:16 the phrase 'God-breathed' uses the word picture of the Spirit breathing into the Scriptures. Read 2 Peter 1:20-21. What do you think it means that the Old Testament prophets were 'carried along by the Holy Spirit'?

4. The Holy Spirit is the spirit of mission

Mission is in the heart of God, - He is a sending God. After his resurrection Jesus met the disciples and breathed on them, saying 'Receive the Holy Spirit', having just told them 'As the Father has sent me, so I am sending you' (John 20:21-22). This was fulfilled on the Day of Pentecost when the disciples were equipped to become witnesses for Jesus (Acts 1:8). If Jesus himself needed the baptism in the Holy Spirit to fulfil his calling, how much more do we?

5. The Holy Spirit is the spirit of promise

Peter said that that Jesus has 'received the promised Holy Spirit from the Father and has poured Him out', Acts 2:33. Here are some of the precious Bible promises concerning the coming of the Holy Spirit. Read these verses and see that the Holy Spirit is promised to you:

- **Joel 2:28-29** *'And afterwards, I will pour out my Spirit on all people. Your sons and daughters will prophesy, your old men will dream dreams, your young men will see visions. Even on my servants, both men and women, I will pour out my Spirit in those days'.*
- **Matthew 3:11** *'John the Baptist said; "I baptise you with water for repentance. But after me comes one who is more powerful than I, whose sandals I am not worthy to carry. He will baptise you with the Holy Spirit and fire".'*
- **Acts 1:5 & 8** *'Jesus said; "For John baptised with water, but in a few days you will be baptised with the Holy Spirit... you will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes on you; and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth".'*
- **Acts 2:38-39** *'Peter replied, "Repent and be baptised, 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. 39 The promise is for you and your children and for all who are far off – for all whom the Lord our God will call".'*

For discussion

- What do you think the main point of the Day of Pentecost was for the early Christians?
- What does the Day of Pentecost mean for you today?
- 'We might be orthodox in our theology but cessationist in our experience', what do you think this means? ('cessationist' is a term for people who do not accept that the miracles in the New Testament occur today). Does this describe your own experience?
- Have you ever experienced a 'Pentecost' moment of being filled with the Holy Spirit? If so, what changes came about because of it?
- Looking at Acts 1:8, what do you think the main purpose of being baptised in the Holy Spirit really is?