

GODHEAD COURSE

Lesson 20

Is the Spirit a Person?

In the previous two lessons it was established that the spirit of a person is the person themselves, that the identity of the comforter, the promised spirit, is the spirit of Jesus Himself in whom is also the Father. To receive Jesus means receiving both the Father and the Son.

This leads some to conclude that the spirit is a mere influence, power, or thoughts. Is this so? Is the Holy Spirit, a person with a personality or an influence with power?

When studying the New Testament, one can only conclude that the Spirit is a person. It is the person of Jesus Christ and the Father.

When the authors of the scriptures speak or write about the spirit, often it is spoken about and given the attributes of a person, not mere influence or power.

Jesus spoke about the spirit that was to be given:

“But the Comforter, which is the Holy Ghost, whom the Father will send in my name, he shall teach you all things, and bring all things to your remembrance, whatsoever I have said unto you.” John 14:26

“I have yet many things to say unto you, but ye cannot bear them now.” John 16:12

“Howbeit when he, the Spirit of truth, is come, he will guide you into all truth: for he shall not speak of himself; but whatsoever he shall hear, that shall he speak: and he will shew you things to come.” John 16:13

Jesus was speaking in parables (John 16:25). It is important to note how Jesus illustrated, or presented the spirit to His hearers:

- The spirit will teach you and remind you of what Jesus taught
- The spirit will guide you into all truth
- The spirit hears what God says = God speaks to the spirit
- The spirit will speak the words that He hears

Jesus illustrated the spirit that was to come as a person. As One who hears and speaks, as One who knows things, understand things, teaches things and remind us of things.

This is not speaking about a mere experience one goes through when reading the word of God. Neither is it speaking about mere thoughts.

One cannot speak to a thought, but can share thoughts and think thoughts and speak thoughts.

Notice how Jesus and the spirit speak what they hear. Talking about Himself, Jesus said:

“For I have not spoken of myself; but the Father which sent me, he gave me a commandment, what I should say, and what I should speak.” John 12:49

“I have many things to say and to judge of you: but he that sent me is true; and I speak to the world those things which I have heard of him.” John 8:26

Jesus told the disciples: the words that I speak to you are what my Father is telling me. I hear from Him and tell you what He says.

When speaking about the spirit to Come, He said the same thing. The spirit will not speak of Himself, whatever He hears, He will relate to you.

This is identifying a person, not a force, influence or words.

The apostles experience with the spirit:

1. The holy spirit Teaches us:

“But God hath revealed them unto us by his Spirit: for the Spirit searcheth all things, yea, the deep things of God.” 1 Cor 2:10

“For what man knoweth the things of a man, save the spirit of man which is in him? even so the things of God knoweth no man, but the Spirit of God.” 1 Cor 2:11

*“Now we have received, not the spirit of the world, but the spirit which is of God; that we might know the things that are freely given to us of God.”
1 Cor 2:12*

*“Which things also we speak, not in the words which man's wisdom teacheth, but which the Holy Ghost teacheth; comparing spiritual things with spiritual.”
1 Cor 2:13*

Paul is endeavouring to show us that the spirit has taught us these truths, by making some these points:

- The spirit searcheth the deep things of God. Meaning, the spirit knows what the thoughts of God are.
- He compares how man's spirit knows what man is thinking, with how God's spirit knows what God is thinking
- We received the spirit of God, this same spirit that knows the things of God

- The spirit taught us these things

This explains what Jesus meant when He spoke in parables, that the spirit will not speak of Himself, but whatsoever He hears, he will say to you.

Then he goes on to say:

“But the natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God: for they are foolishness unto him: neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned.” 1 Cor 2:14

“But he that is spiritual judgeth all things, yet he himself is judged of no man.” 1 Cor 2:15

“For who hath known the mind of the Lord, that he may instruct him? But we have the mind of Christ.” 1 Cor 2:16

Meaning, we know the thoughts of Christ and what He knows. Why?

- Jesus said whatsoever I hear, I say unto you
- Whatsoever the spirit hears, he will say unto you.
- We know what Christ knows.

This of course is not a general statement to mean that now we are omniscient because Christ is, not at all. Paul is speaking in relation to what we, as humans, need to know.

Since we have the spirit that is of God, we have the mind of Christ, Paul says we know what He knows. Paul does not say we have the mind of the Spirit because the Spirit is none other than Jesus Christ. By receiving the spirit, we are receiving Jesus Christ.

2. The Spirit speaks to people

*“Then the **Spirit said unto Philip**, Go near, and join thyself to this chariot.” Acts 8:29 (see also Acts 10:19; 13:2)*

3. The spirit speaks through people:

“For it is not ye that speak, but the Spirit of your Father which speaketh in you.” Matt 10:20 (See also: Mark 13:11 “the holy Ghost”; Luke 21:15 “I will give you a mouth to speak”)

“And they were all filled with the Holy Ghost, and began to speak with other tongues, as the Spirit gave them utterance.” Acts 2:4 (see also Acts 21:4)

4. The spirit instructs people what to do:

*“So they, being **sent forth by the Holy Ghost**, departed unto Seleucia; and from thence they sailed to Cyprus.” Acts 13:4*

5. The Spirit makes decisions.

*“For **it seemed good to the Holy Ghost**, and to us, to lay upon you no greater burden than these necessary things;” Acts 15:28*

They are speaking about the Holy spirit as if it or he is a person like them, making decisions like they are making decisions.

They said, the holy spirit thought such and such, and we think the same; we agree.

6. The spirit transports people:

“And when they were come up out of the water, the Spirit of the Lord caught away Philip, that the eunuch saw him no more: and he went on his way rejoicing.”

Acts 8:39

7. The Spirit can be lied to.

*“But Peter said, Ananias, why hath Satan filled thine heart to lie to the **Holy Ghost**, and to keep back part of the price of the land?” Acts 5:3*

*“...thou hast not lied unto men, **but unto God.**” Acts 5:4*

*“Then Peter said unto her, How is it that ye have agreed together to tempt the **Spirit of the Lord?** “ Acts 5:9*

It is the spirit of the Lord, not someone else called God the Holy spirit. Yet as far as the apostles were concerned, the spirit of the Lord was a person that could be lied to. The spirit is a person, not a mere influence, thoughts, or mind.

8. The Spirit can forbid people from doing something

*“Now when they had gone throughout Phrygia and the region of Galatia, and were **forbidden of the Holy Ghost** to preach the word in Asia,” Acts 16:6*

*“After they were come to Mysia, they assayed to go into Bithynia: but the **Spirit** suffered them not.” Acts 16:7*

Just a side note, notice how other translations translate the term “But the spirit suffered them not” in vs 7

(RV) ...the **Spirit of Jesus** suffered them not;

(ISV) ..., but the **Spirit of Jesus** did not permit them,

(ESV) A... but the **Spirit of Jesus** did not allow them.

(ASV) ... and **the Spirit of Jesus** suffered them not;

The apostles did not understand the spirit to be a different person than Jesus Himself, it is His spirit and His person.

9. **The Spirit gives spiritual gifts.**

“But the one and the same Spirit works all these things, distributing separately to each one as He desires.” 1 Cor 12:11

Yes, the Trinitarians use these thoughts and they are right, but their conclusion is wrong. The Holy spirit is a person. The Trinitarian mistakenly makes him a different person other than Jesus.

The bible is clear on the identity of the spirit! It is the spirit of Jesus Himself, who is His own person, life, and presence.

Consider this point:

“In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God.” John 1:1

*“And **the Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us**, (and we beheld his glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father,) full of grace and truth.” John 1:14*

These two verses indicate that the man Jesus is the Word that was with God and is God. Why believe this? Believe it because the bible says “*the Word was made flesh*”

This means, the same Word that was with God was made flesh and became Jesus Christ.

Prior to the incarnation, Was the word a person? Yes.

Did this Word become any less person when He was made flesh? No.

He is as much a person as God is a person.

At the end of Jesus’s work on earth, the bible says:

“And so it is written, The first man Adam was made a living soul; the last Adam was made a quickening spirit.” 1 Cor 15:45

Jesus was made a life-giving spirit. And just like when He was made flesh He dwelt among us, in the same way, when He was made spirit, He came to dwell in us:

“And because ye are sons, God hath sent forth the Spirit of his Son into your hearts, crying, Abba, Father.” Gal 4:6

The Word was made flesh to dwell among us, and then was made Spirit to dwell in us.

Jesus said this in John 14 while talking about the comforter:

“And I will pray the Father, and he shall give you another Comforter, that he may abide with you for ever;” John 14:16

*“Even the Spirit of truth; whom the world cannot receive, because it seeth him not, neither knoweth him: but ye know him; for he **DWELLETH WITH YOU, AND SHALL BE IN YOU.**” John 14:17*

*“I will not leave you comfortless: **I WILL COME TO YOU.**” John 14:18*

It is the same person in all these stages, and not any less person in any of these stages. The form, or manifestation of this person has changed, but He is no less of a person.

- When He was with God before the incarnation, He was a person.
- When He was made flesh, He was a person
- When He was made spirit, He was a person

We do not understand the “nature” He was in before the incarnation, and neither do we understand the “nature” He is in now after the incarnation.

But we know the identity in these 3 stages. The self-same identity. The Son of God.

We may not understand or comprehend the nature of the spirit: likewise, we do not understand the nature of God.

However, we must believe what the scripture says; Jesus was made a spirit.

When He was on earth, Jesus was as much a person as God is a person

When He was made a spirit, Jesus is again as much a person as God is a Person

In all these stages it is the self-same person, the word who became Jesus who became a life-giving spirit.

To minimise the spirit into a mere influence, power, or words is tantamount to limiting God.

Just because the manifestation of the Son of God has changed, it does not mean that He lost His personhood.

So, to conclude, the spirit is a person. It is the person of Jesus Christ in whom is found the Father.