

PNEUMATOLOGY (13)

The ability to make progress in the spiritual life by continually being set apart from sin unto righteousness (progressive sanctification) is also a work that is accomplished by the Holy Spirit (Gal. 5:22-26; I Thess. 4:3-4). The potential of someday being set apart to God forever, ultimate sanctification is also due to the work of the Holy Spirit (Eph. 1:4, 13-14). It is the Holy Spirit who guarantees that we will be to the praise of His glory.

Any work of sanctification which will be accepted by God, must be accomplished by God. Since it is primarily the Spirit's responsibility to accomplish this, we must conclude that the Holy Spirit is God.

(Work #8) - The Holy Spirit is involved in the divine work of intercession.

A very critical passage, which if examined carefully, must lead one to the conclusion that the Holy Spirit is God, is Rom. 8:26-29. What is stated here is that the Holy Spirit intercedes when finite beings have reached their limitation of not knowing how to pray. The fact that the Holy Spirit is able to pray as one who specifically knows the will of God, demands that He be God. It must be observed that the believer committed to God, is one who will know the will of God (Rom. 12:1-2). When this person reaches a point when he no longer knows what to pray for, the only person more knowledgeable of the will of God than a person committed to God, is God, Himself. Therefore, the Spirit who prays and intercedes must be God. This type of intercessory work demands it.

Although we will examine these works of the Spirit later, it is very clear that these works do establish that the Holy Spirit is God.

Evidence #4 - The evidence of the Holy Spirit's divine associations.

Although we have already established this point, it is well to systematize this truth under this heading:

(Association #1) - The Holy Spirit is specifically identified as the Spirit of God. I Cor. 6:11

(Association #2) - The Holy Spirit is specifically identified as the Spirit of Jehovah.

This identification is clearly established by N.T. revelation when compared with O.T. revelation—Acts 28:25; Isaiah 6:1-13; Heb. 10:15-17; Jer. 31:31-34.

(Association #3) - The Holy Spirit is specifically identified as God.

As Dr. Ryrie says, “Blasphemy of and lying to the Spirit are the same as doing these things to God” (Matt. 12:31-32; Acts 5:3-4).

(Association #4) - The Holy Spirit is specifically equated with other members of the Godhead.

He is specifically equated with the other two members in regard to discipleship (Matt. 28:19) and also in regard to benedictory blessings (II Cor. 13:14).

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The names, the attributes, the works and the associations clearly establish that the Holy Spirit is God. There can be no biblical doubt about it, for the biblical record is very clear on this point.

QUESTION #5 – Does the Bible teach that the Holy Spirit is a person?

There have been times, in the history of the church, when heretics have denied the personality of the Holy Spirit. Some have attempted to make Him just a special force or influence and even denied that the Holy Spirit is a person. Groups like the Monarchians, the Arians and the Socinians attacked His person in past history, and modern day groups such as the Unitarians, liberals and certain neo-orthodox theologians do so today. (See Charles Ryrie, *Basic Theology*, p. 343.)

Mr. John Miles, in his doctrine notes, writes: “By this (the personality of the Holy Spirit), we mean that the Holy Spirit is a person, one of the three persons of the Godhead. He is not a mere force or influence, but is a person” (John Miles, *Pneumatology*, Chapter 7, p. 16).

We may easily and biblically establish that the Holy Spirit is, in fact, a real person:

Proof #1 - The Holy Spirit has a personality.

In order to be identified as a person, one must possess the characteristics and attributes of a person. We have suggested many times before that this certainly suggests one must possess the attributes of personality, which include intellect, emotions and will.

As we examine the Sacred Text, we discover:

- 1) The Holy Spirit has an intellect. In fact, the intellect possessed by the Holy Spirit is very unique in that He knows and searches the deep things of God (I Cor. 2:10-11); He knows in His mind how to pray when believers don't (Rom. 8:27); and He has the ability to teach spiritual truth (I Cor. 2:13). Certainly the Holy Spirit possesses a very unique intellect.
- 2) The Holy Spirit has emotions. There can be no denying the fact that the Holy Spirit possesses feelings. For example, the Holy Spirit may be grieved (Eph. 4:30). Dr. Charles Ryrie appropriately writes: “He can be grieved by the sinful actions of believers (Eph. 4:30)—an influence cannot be grieved” (Ryrie, p. 343).
- 3) The Holy Spirit has a will. For example, He can give spiritual gifts according to His will (I Cor. 12:11), and He directs believers according to His will (Acts 16:6-11).

The Holy Spirit possesses an intellect, emotions and will and, as Ryrie says, “Since genuine personality possesses intelligence, feelings, and will, and since the Spirit has these attributes, He must be a Person” (p. 343).

Proof #2 - The Holy Spirit has the actions of a person.

The Holy Spirit is involved in actions that demand He be a real person. A mere force or influence or some personification could not possibly perform the acts attributed to the Holy Spirit:

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(Action #1) - The Holy Spirit teaches. John 14:26; I Cor. 2:13; Eph. 4:11-12

(Action #2) - The Holy Spirit speaks. John 16:13; Gal. 4:6

(Action #3) - The Holy Spirit convicts. John 16:8

(Action #4) - The Holy Spirit intercedes. Romans 8:26

(Action #5) - The Holy Spirit leads. Gal. 5:18

(Action #6) - The Holy Spirit regenerates. John 3:6

(Action #7) - The Holy Spirit appoints. Acts 13:2, 4; 20:28; I Cor. 12:11

These are acts of a real person. Truth is these are acts of a very unique and very special person. However, even though these works are far beyond the works of any other, they do prove the Holy Spirit is a real divine person.

Proof #3 - The Holy Spirit may be treated as a person.

To receive certain types of treatment requires that one be a real person. For example, you cannot lie to a door. A lie is a deceptive act of one person toward another person. The Bible is clear that the Holy Spirit is treated as a person, thus proving He is a person:

(Treatment #1) - The Holy Spirit may be lied to. Acts 5:3

(Treatment #2) - The Holy Spirit may be resisted. Acts 7:51

(Treatment #3) - The Holy Spirit may be obeyed. Acts 10:19-21

(Treatment #4) - The Holy Spirit may be grieved. Ephesians 4:25-30

(Treatment #5) - The Holy Spirit may be insulted. Hebrews 10:29

For the Holy Spirit to be able to be treated like this requires that He be a real person. He is not a force or an influence, He is a real person.

Proof #4 - The Holy Spirit relates to other persons as a person.

It may be clearly established that the way the Holy Spirit relates to other persons, proves He is a person, Himself.

(Relationship #1) - The Holy Spirit related to the apostles as a person. Acts 15:28