



**An undenominational publication
devoted to the teachings of Jesus and
His apostles and dedicated to those
who seek the truth.**

Volume 12, Number 6
November/December 2016

WHO IS THE HOLY SPIRIT?

There are many references in the Bible to the Holy Spirit. The Holy Spirit is mentioned in 23 out of 39 books of the Old Testament and in 24 of the 27 books of the New Testament. He is called “the Holy Spirit” (Acts 2:38), the “Spirit of God” (Ephesians 5:30), the “Spirit of truth” (John 16:13) and the “eternal Spirit” (Hebrews 9:14).

The Holy Spirit is not a glorified “it,” nor an impersonal “force.” The Holy Spirit is a person. Jesus refers to the Spirit as “He.” He was the counselor for the defense when the apostles were brought before hostile authorities. Jesus promised: “I will ask the Father, and He will give you another Counselor to be with you forever--the Spirit of truth. The world cannot accept Him, because it neither sees Him nor knows Him. But you know Him, for He lives with you and will be in you” (John 14:16-17). The Holy Spirit has feelings -- He can be “grieved” (Ephesians 4:30). The Holy Spirit can “speak” and “hear.” Jesus said: “When He, the Spirit of truth, comes . . . He will speak only what He hears, and He will tell you what is yet to come” (John 16:13).

The scriptures also refer to the “mind of the Spirit.” God knows “the mind of the Spirit, because the Spirit intercedes for the saints in accordance with God’s will” (Romans 8:27). The Holy Spirit has a “will”: “all these are the work of one and the same Spirit, and He gives them to each one, just as He determines” (1 Corinthians 12:11). The Holy Spirit also has affection: “I urge you, brothers, by our Lord Jesus Christ and by the love of the Spirit, to join me in my struggle by praying to God for me” (Romans 15:30). All of these descriptions are attributes of a person.

The Holy Spirit is one the three persons of the Godhead. He has the personality of God --He is omniscient. (2 Corinthians 2:10-11); He is omnipotent (Micah 3:8); He is omnipresent (Psalms 139: 7-10). The Holy Spirit is all knowing and loves each and every one of us.

— **Larry Krause**, Minister
Church of Christ, Kittanning, Pennsylvania

AUTHOR OF SCRIPTURE "THE WONDER OF ITS INSPIRATION!"



Did you know the Holy Spirit gave us the Bible? Scripture explains how the Holy Spirit accomplished this: “Above all, you must understand that no prophecy of Scripture came about by the prophet’s own interpretation. For prophecy never had its origin in the will of man, but men spoke from God as they were *carried along* by the Holy Spirit” (2 Peter 1:20-21). When we read Scriptures we are reading the very words of the Holy Spirit!

THE SCOPE:

Every one of the 40 writers of the Bible was “*carried along*” by the Holy Spirit. All scripture is inspired of God.

THE NAVIGATION:

The Greek word for “*carried along*” in 2 Peter 1:21 is the same word found in Acts 27:15 where we read of a ship that was *driven, directed, and carried about* by the wind. Experienced sailors could not navigate the ship because the wind was so strong. This is similar to the Spirit’s driving, directing, and carrying human authors of the Bible as He wished. The word is a strong one, indicating the Spirit’s complete superintendence of the human authors. Yet, just as the sailors were active on the ship (though the wind, not the sailors, controlled the ship’s movement), so human authors were active in writing (using their own writing styles) as the Spirit directed. The Holy Spirit supernaturally superintended weak and erring humans writers keeping them from all error.

THE FORMATION:

The Holy Spirit revealed the sixty-six books of scripture over a period of some 1600 years. Yet, the final product was “one” book with a united theme, harmonious content and absolutely no contradictions!

The Bible is the greatest literature in the world because of its divine origin. The implications are so far-reaching that every part of our lives should be affected.

“How precious is the book divine, by inspiration given. Bright as a lamp, its precepts shine, to guide our souls to heaven” (John Fawcett).

— Timothy Tarbet, Minister
Church of Christ, New Milford, Connecticut

WE NEED THE HOLY SPIRIT

You may be wondering, “Do I really need the Holy Spirit?” That’s a reasonable question that deserves a Biblical response.

First of all, the indwelling Spirit marks us—as being saved (Acts 2:38), as being adopted sons of God (Romans 8:15,16), and as belonging to the Lord (Ephesians 1:13). God’s chosen people in the Old Testament, the Jews, were marked with circumcision, so now the indwelling Spirit’s mark (Romans 2:29) effectively “circumcises” our hearts, marking Christians as God’s chosen people. In the same way that a king would put his seal on things to show ownership, we are sealed by God as His possession. On the day of judgment, Christians will be unmistakably marked as God’s property, not Satan’s.



Second, the indwelling Spirit also intercedes for us. The apostle Paul teaches us, “In the same way, the Spirit helps us in our weakness. We do not know what we ought to pray for, but the Spirit Himself intercedes for us with groans that words cannot express” (Romans 8:26). Have you ever been so moved emotionally that all your words to God in prayer just seemed to fall short of what you wanted to say? You aren’t alone in feeling that way. But the Scripture promises that the Holy Spirit living in the Christian knows the grief and pain intimately, and is able to fully tell the Father what you need to say in “God-language”. What a blessing!

Lastly, the indwelling Spirit strengthens us in the inner man. While this feature of the indwelling Spirit is more subtle, it is still worthy of mention and appreciation. It is more subtle because God will not interfere with man’s free will, yet the Spirit has a definite influence in the life of a Christian—“I pray that out of His glorious riches He may strengthen you with power through His Spirit in your inner being,” (Ephesians 3:16). We are greatly aided, of course, by Scripture and the conscience that God has given us; but this strength from the Spirit in the inner man is more than just Scripture or conscience. And for anyone who’s ever struggled with a full-on assault of Satan, you know we need every shred of strength possible.

Yes, we need the indwelling Spirit of God. He is our mark, our intercessor, and our strength in the inner man. Receive this blessing today: “Repent and be baptized, 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” (Acts 2:38).

— **Park Linscomb**, Minister
Church of Christ, Manchester, New Hampshire

THE INDWELLING SPIRIT



Every Christian has the promised gift of the Holy Spirit (Acts 2:38). We know this is true because God promised it in the Word of God. We do not need any emotional experience to confirm this truth. The evidence that we have the Spirit in us is the fruit of love, joy, peace, forbearance, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, and self control (Galatians 5:22-23).

Take a look at these important verses from the Scriptures about God's indwelling Spirit:

“I pray that out of His glorious riches He may strengthen you with power through His Spirit in your inner being . . . Now to Him who is able to do immeasurably more than we ask or imagine, according to His power that is at work within us, to Him be the glory in the church and in Christ Jesus throughout all generations, for ever and ever! Amen”

(Ephesians 3:20-21).

God is able to do more than we ask in prayer or imagine by faith based on His power source located in us, which is the indwelling Holy Spirit. This is not about changing other people or circumstances but about what God can do through us. This is promised not only for Christians in the first century but for all future generations including us. We must change our minds (repent) and believe in the Christ that lives in us through the presence of God's Spirit. The same power that raised Jesus from the dead is at work in us (Ephesians 1:19-20).

“If the Spirit of Him who raised Jesus from the dead is living in you, He who raised Christ from the dead will also give life to your mortal bodies because of His Spirit who lives in you. Therefore, . . . we have an obligation but it is not to the flesh, to live according to it. For if you live according to the flesh, you will die; but if by the Spirit you put to death the misdeeds of the body, you will live” (Romans 8:10-13).

The goal of the indwelling Spirit is not to work miraculous signs and wonders. Instead, God wants to change your life to make it conform to Christ's example. This is available to every Christian who has obedient faith in Christ. “You are all sons of God through faith in Christ Jesus, for all of you who were baptized into Christ have clothed yourselves with Christ.... Because you are sons, God sent the Spirit of His Son into our hearts, the Spirit who calls out, ‘Abba, Father’. So you are no longer a slave, but a son; and since you are a son, God has made you also an heir” (Galatians 3:26-4:7).

-- **Bruce Wadzeck**, Minister
Church of Christ, Princeton , New Jersey

THE SPIRIT'S CONVICTING WORD

Jesus promised the coming of the Holy Spirit: “When He (the Holy Spirit) comes, He will convict the world of guilt in regard to sin and righteousness and judgment: in regard to sin, because men do not believe in Me; in regard to righteousness, because I am going to the Father, where you can see Me no longer; and in regard to judgment, because the Prince of this world now stands condemned” (John 16:7-9).

Notice the three functions of the Holy Spirit. First, the Holy Spirit *convicts people of their sins* through the preaching of the gospel. Through the inspired words of the apostles the world realizes its wickedness toward God and the eternal consequences of sin. Second, the Holy Spirit *convicts the world of righteousness* or of doing the right things to please God for forgiveness which the Holy Spirit will direct. Third, the Holy Spirit *reveals the coming judgment* which all of us must face. All men have sinned and need the mercies of God before they stand before the judgment seat of Christ (2 Corinthians 5:10).

The apostle Peter promised those who repented and were baptized that they would receive the gift of the Holy Spirit (Acts 2:38). This promise was for all whom the Lord God shall call. Peter remarked that God has given the Holy Spirit to everyone who obeys Him (Acts 5:32). Our bodies become the temple of the Holy Spirit (1 Corinthians 6:19, 20).

As many as heard Peter’s message were baptized and on the same day about 3000 souls were added to their number and were assured of the promise of the Holy Spirit to those repent and are baptized. Baptism was very crucial in his message and was seen as a believer’s response to the gospel message about the cross. It was and continues to be a personal admission of one’s need of forgiveness. Baptism (immersion) shows the sinners’ readiness to accept what Christ has done for us.

The Holy Spirit was very instrumental in fulfilling the redemption plan that the Lamb of God would come to die on the cross for the sins of the world. This atonement for our sins is the price Christ suffered in our place. Take a few moments to reflect on what would have been your situation if Christ had not died for you. Without the sacrifice of Jesus there would be no blessing of the Holy Spirit and no hope of resurrection! To enjoy this blessing, hear the convicting word, believe in the Lord Jesus, repent of your sins and be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ. When you do these things the Lord will add you to his church (Acts. 2:47).

— Paul Oppong, Minister
North Bronx Church of Christ, New York, New York



"I CAN'T DO MIRACULOUS THINGS. DO I REALLY HAVE THE SPIRIT?"

Some sincere believers have thought they should be able to speak in tongues, prophecy the future, heal the sick or perform other miracles if they truly have received the Holy Spirit. They have been taught to expect such powers if they pray hard enough and long enough. Some have despaired that perhaps God has let them down, maybe he does not love them, that He has withheld His Spirit from them. If you have entertained such thoughts, please consider the following Bible facts:

I. NOT EVERY CHRISTIAN HAD MIRACULOUS POWERS IN THE BIBLE. In Acts chapter 2 about 3,000 people were promised that when they repented and were baptized they would receive the Holy Spirit (Acts 2:38). However, only the apostles could perform miracles; no one else was able to do "wonders and signs" (Acts 2:43). As thousands more believed in the Lord, none but the apostles worked "miraculous signs and wonders" (Acts 5:12-14). In fact, most Christians who received the Holy Spirit were not able to speak in tongues or perform other miraculous signs. It is important that we understand that the Spirit comes to everyone who repents and is baptized to give spiritual strength to overcome sin and to produce godly character (Galatians 5:22-23). However, the ability to perform miraculous signs was limited to a relatively few Christians in New Testament times.

2. MIRACULOUS POWERS WERE PASSED-ON BY THE APOSTLES. When apostles laid their hands on others, those individuals were able to speak in tongues and prophecy, but without the laying on of apostles' hands, no one received these gifts (Acts 8:18; 19:6). When all the apostles died, no one remained who could pass along miraculous abilities. There are no inspired apostles of Christ in our day; they existed only in the foundation of the church (Ephesians 2:20).

3. THERE ARE VAST DIFFERENCES BETWEEN MIRACLES IN THE BIBLE AND SO-CALLED 'MIRACLES' TODAY. Signs and wonders in New Testament days included the ability to raise the dead (Acts 9:40-41). Every person the apostles attempted to heal was healed -- they never had a failure! (Acts 5:15-16). If modern evangelists had apostolic powers like those which existed in the first century they should be able to do the same things the apostles did. They should be able to cure everyone who comes for healing and to open graves in the cemeteries.

Continued on Page 7

Continued From Page 6

4. THE DIVINE PURPOSE FOR MIRACLES HAS BEEN FULFILLED.

There was a reason for God giving power to heal the sick, raise the dead and speak in tongues: these signs confirmed the newly-revealed word of God. The teachings of Jesus and His apostles were just beginning to be introduced. How would people know the apostles were proclaiming a true message from God? God confirmed the spoken word with unmistakable and irrefutable miracles. Scriptures says: “The Lord confirmed the message of His grace by enabling them to do miraculous signs and wonders” (Acts 14:3). God testified to His word by “signs, wonders and various miracles” (Hebrews 2:2-4). God “confirmed His word by signs that accompanied it” (Mark 16:20). What God revealed in the first century was confirmed for all ages. By the end of the first century all the truth had been revealed; the faith had been once for all delivered to God’s people (Jude 3). The divine purpose for “spiritual gifts” had been fulfilled. God is revealing no new messages today. “Signs and wonders” did not continue beyond the first century.

— David Tarbet, Outreach Minister
Church of Christ New Milford, Connecticut

**You Are
Invited
To Attend**

**CHURCHES
OF CHRIST**

**NEW MILFORD
CONNECTICUT
CHURCH OF
CHRIST**

129 Litchfield Rd
(2 miles North of Hospital)

Tel: 860-355-0489
Timothy Tarbet
Minister

10 AM Bible Class
11 AM Worship
WEB:
nmchurchofchrist.org

**FARMINGTON
CONNECTICUT
CHURCH OF
CHRIST**

69 South Road

Tel: 860-677-1463
Jesus Nieves
Minister

9:30 AM Bible Class
10:30 AM Worship
WEB: kentcount
churchofchrist.org

**COVENTRY
RHODE ISLAND
CHURCH OF
CHRIST**

2435 Nooseneck Hill
Rd, Bldg C, Unit 3

Tel: 401-397-9700
Gary Babcock
Minister

9:30 AM Bible Class
10:30 AM Worship
WEB: kentcount
churchofchrist.org

**S. BURLINGTON
VERMONT
CHURCH OF
CHRIST**

330 Dorset St.

Tel: 802-864-7939
Johnny Davis
Minister

10 AM Bible Class
11 AM Worship
WEB:
gburchurchofchrist.com

**CASTLETON
VERMONT
CHURCH OF
CHRIST**

37 Castleton
Meadows

Tel: 802-683-4970
Kirk Israel
Minister

10 AM Bible Class
11 AM Worship
WEB:
vermontchurchofchrist.com

**UNION CITY
NEW JERSEY
CHURCH OF
CHRIST**

Iglesia de Cristo
4509 45th St (@ Park Ave)
ESL Classes, Bible Studies

Tel: 423-414-8011
Edelto Villa
Minister

11 AM; 4:00 PM
Worship
E-MAIL:
sirgalahadvilla2013@
gmail.com

**WORCESTER
MASSACHUSETTS
CHURCH OF
CHRIST**

89 Beaver Brook
Pkwy

Tel: 347-313-5813
John Nat Kissi
Minister

9:30 AM Bible Class
10:30 AM Worship
WEB: worcestercoc.org

Find the **CHURCH OF CHRIST** in Your Community

<http://www.churchzip.org>

**Request These Free
Spiritual Booklets**

- Good News for You
- Is the Sabbath Binding Today?
- The Proper Mode of Baptism
- Who Are Churches of Christ?

Name: _____
Address: _____
Apartment: _____
City, State: _____
Zip: _____
E-mail: _____

**Send requests to:
CHRIST FOR TODAY**

**P.O. Box 755
New Milford, CT 06776
Call 860-355-0489**

E-mail: christfortoday@gmail.com

CHRIST FOR TODAY

David Tarbet, Editor

**New Milford Church of Christ
129 Litchfield Road (Route 202)
(2 miles North of New Milford Hospital)
P.O. Box 755
New Milford, Connecticut 06776**

CHECK OUT THESE WEBSITES

**<http://christfortoday.org>
<http://nmchurchofchrist.org>**

NONPROFIT ORG.
U.S. Postage
PAID
Dallas, Texas
Permit 2829