**Lesson 2**

**The Deity of the Holy Spirit**

**“Is the Holy Spirit deity or not deity?”**

* Notice that this is a binary question. Only 2 answers are possible, ‘yes or no.’ Why is this question and its answer so important?
* It is very important that we understand that there are only two possible answers to the question posed because either the Holy Spirit is fully God or He is something less than God. And if the Holy Spirit is less than fully God in any way, then He is a mere creature. No other possibilities exist. He is either God or He is not.
  + This question is vitally important because there are some who would like to put the Holy Spirit into some “almost God” category . . . that He is more than a creature, but less than God. But if the Holy Spirit is less than God in any way, then He is less than God in every way, just as Satan is.

**What is the evidence that the Holy Spirit is God?**

***Acts 5:3-4— 3 But Peter said, "Ananias, why has Satan filled your heart to lie to the Holy Spirit and to keep back some of the price of the land? 4 "While it remained unsold, did it not remain your own? And after it was sold, was it not under your control? Why is it that you have conceived this deed in your heart? You have not lied to men but to God."***

***2 Peter 1:20-21— 20 But know this first of all, that no prophecy of Scripture is a matter of one's own interpretation, 21 for no prophecy was ever made by an act of human will, but men moved by the Holy Spirit spoke from God.***

* + This verse states that the prophets received their messages directly from God.

God’s incommunicable attributes of holiness, eternality, infinity, omniscience, omnipresence and omnipotence are all found in the Holy Spirit. And since only God possesses these incommunicable attributes, the Holy Spirit must be God.

* The Omnipresence of the Holy Spirit is seen in . . .

***Psalm 139:7-10— 7 Where can I go from Your Spirit? Or where can I flee from Your presence? 8 If I ascend to heaven, You are there; If I make my bed in Sheol, behold, You are there. 9 If I take the wings of the dawn, If I dwell in the remotest part of the sea, 10 Even there Your hand will lead me, And Your right hand will lay hold of me.***

* The Omniscience of the Holy Spirit is seen in . . .

***Isaiah 40:13-14—13 Who has directed the Spirit of the LORD, Or as His counselor has informed Him? 14 With whom did He consult and who gave Him understanding? And who taught Him in the path of justice and taught Him knowledge And informed Him of the way of understanding?***

***John 14:26— "But the Helper, the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in My name, He will teach you all things, and bring to your remembrance all that I said to you.***

***John 16:13— "But when He, the Spirit of truth, comes, He will guide you into all the truth; for He will not speak on His own initiative, but whatever He hears, He will speak; and He will disclose to you what is to come.***

* The Omnipotence of the Holy Spirit is seen in . . .
* ***Luke 1:35—The angel answered and said to her, "The Holy Spirit will come upon you, and the power of the Most High will overshadow you; and for that reason the holy Child shall be called the Son of God.***

***Romans 8:11—But if the Spirit of Him who raised Jesus from the dead dwells in you, He who raised Christ Jesus from the dead will also give life to your mortal bodies through His Spirit who dwells in you.***

***Romans 15:19—in the power of signs and wonders, in the power of the Spirit;***

* The Eternality of the Holy Spirit is seen in . . .

***Hebrews 9:14—how much more will the blood of Christ, who through the eternal Spirit offered Himself without blemish to God, cleanse your conscience from dead works to serve the living God?***

* The prerogatives of deity . . . sovereignty and supremacy . . . are possessed by the Holy Spirit.
  + It is the Holy Spirit who sovereignly dispenses His spiritual gifts to the saints.
  + It is the Holy Spirit who sovereignly directs the Mediator to intervene on our behalf.
  + It is the sovereign authority of the Holy Spirit to set leaders in place within the church.
* There are specific works of God that are attributed only to the Holy Spirit.
  + These are the works of providence in the lives of His creatures, His unique divine roles in regeneration and sanctification, and His accomplishing miracles through Christ and the apostles here on earth.

**The Titles of the Holy Spirit**

“The three Persons in the Godhead have graciously revealed Themselves through a variety of names and titles. The nature of God we are utterly incapable of comprehending, but His person and character may be known. Each name or title that God has appropriated unto Himself is that whereby He reveals Himself to us, and whereby He would have us know Him.

“The names of God are for the purpose of expressing Him to us. They set forth His perfections and make known the different relations that He has with the children of men and His own favored people. Names are given for this intent, that they might declare what the thing is to which the name belongs. Thus, when God created Adam and gave him dominion over this visible world, He caused the beasts of the field and the fowls of the air to pass before him, that they might receive names from him (Gen 2:19). In like manner, we learn about God through the names and titles He has taken. By means of them, God spells out Himself to us by His various perfections.”

* Who the Holy Spirit is in His divine Person and ineffable character is made known to us by means of the many names and varied titles that are accorded to Him in Scripture.

1. The third member of the Triune Godhead is identified as the Spirit.

* There are two things that are significant about the title the Spirit.
  + First, that as the Spirit we are explicitly told that the Spirit is a non-corporeal being. He has no physical form or manifestation. The Holy Spirit is a spirit being.
  + Secondly, His designation as the Spirit refers to His mode of operation in the hearts of His people. Just as the wind moves about us and we cannot perceive it, so the Spirit moves in and around us and we cannot perceive Him. We only see Him through the work that He accomplishes.

2. He is called by way of eminency (glory and importance) the Holy Spirit.

* The term “holy” is synonymous with “eminence.” Both terms refer to the Spirit’s unapproachable glory and uniqueness. The Holy Spirit is glorious in His holiness. He is unlike anyone or anything else. He is totally unique and glorious in His essential being.
* Secondly, being holy the title Holy Spirit designates that all His operations and all His works are holy. All that the Spirit is and does is holy.

3. As Nehemiah 9:20 states, ***"You gave Your good Spirit to instruct them, Your manna You did not withhold from their mouth, And You gave them water for their thirst.”***

* What is the significance of the Spirit’s title of “Good Spirit”?
  + As we learn in Matthew 19:17, only God is good. Because God is good, all that He is and does is, by definition, “good.”
  + We also learn in Ephesians 5:9 for the fruit of the Light consists in all goodness and righteousness and truth. Therefore, by definition, all that the Spirit is and does is Holy and Good.

4. As we learn in Psalm 51:12, David calls upon the Spirit as free (KJV) or willing (NASB).

* As Pink states, “He is a most munificent Giver, bestowing His favors severally as He pleases, liberally, and upbraiding not.” In light of David’s use of the term free or willing in his psalm of repentance Albert Barnes states, “it would seem here to mean “a “willing” spirit,” referring to David’s own mind or spirit; and the prayer is, that God would uphold or sustain him “in” a “willing” spirit or state of mind; that is, a state of mind in which he would he “willing” and “ready” to obey all the commands of God, and to serve him faithfully.”
* What the Spirit does and gives is according to His free willingness. He gives willingly to His children and makes us free and willing to obey His leading. True “free will” is only through the Spirit who freely gives to us all things that make us free. “The Spirit makes our unwilling spirit willing.”

5. The Spirit is called the Spirit of Christ (Romans 8:9) and the Spirit of the Lord (Acts 8:29)

* The titles the Spirit of Christ and the Spirit of the Lord both speak of the fact that the Holy Spirit speaks and acts with the authority of Christ to make known to His own the teaching and leading of Christ. The Holy Spirit represents and glorifies Christ as His representative in Christ’s people.

***John 16:14— "He will glorify Me, for He will take of Mine and will disclose it to you.***

***Romans 8:9—However, you are not in the flesh but in the Spirit, if indeed the Spirit of God dwells in you. But if anyone does not have the Spirit of Christ, he does not belong to Him.***

***Acts 2:33— "Therefore having been exalted to the right hand of God, and having received from the Father the promise of the Holy Spirit, He has poured forth this which you both see and hear.***

***Acts 8:29— Then the Spirit said to Philip, "Go up and join this chariot.”***

6. In Hebrews 9:14 we learn that the Holy Spirit is entitled the Eternal Spirit.

* The title the Eternal Spirit is descriptive of the eternality of God. Being eternal and infinite, all three members of the Triune Godhead are without beginning or end. The Holy Spirit is an eternal being and this title in Hebrews 9:14 is a reminder of this incommunicable attribute of God.

***Hebrews 9:14— how much more will the blood of Christ, who through the eternal Spirit offered Himself without blemish to God, cleanse your conscience from dead works to serve the living God?***

7. One of the best-known titles of the Holy Spirit is the Comforter, Helper or Paraclete, found in John 14:16, 26; 15:26 and 16:7.

* The title Comforter, Helper or Paraclete is very descriptive of the role of the Holy Spirit in the lives of Christians.
  + The Greek term *parakletos* means “consoler” or “comforter.” The English word “Comforter” is derived from the Latin words com, meaning “along side of,” and fortis, meaning “strength.”
* The word Comforter is used by the Lord Jesus to describe how the Holy Spirit would take the Lord’s place alongside the saints to give us strength. As the Comforter the Spirit strengthens in various ways, consoling the cast down, giving grace when we are weak or timid, and providing guidance to show us the right way.

8. One of the other titles that the Lord Jesus uses to refer to the Holy Spirit in John 14:16-17 is the Spirit of truth.

***John 14:16-17— 16 "I will ask the Father, and He will give you another Helper, that He may be with you forever; 17 that is the Spirit of truth, whom the world cannot receive, because it does not see Him or know Him, but you know Him because He abides with you and will be in you.***

* As the Comforter or Helper, one of the significant roles of the Spirit is to teach us and guide us in the path of truth. Remembering that Jesus said, I am the Way, the Truth and the Life, one of the roles of the Holy Spirit is to teach us who Jesus is. In the process of our sanctification it is the Holy Spirit who reveals to us and teaches us about the Truth. What a perfect title, then, that He is the Spirit of truth, for it is through Him that we come to a knowledge and belief in the truth of our Lord and Savior.

**Question:** If someone were to ask you why the Spirit has so many different titles, what would be your response?

**Answer:** The titles of the Spirit are used to describe the nature and character of the Spirit to us. His names and titles reveals who He is to us.

**The Covenant—Offices of the Holy Spirit**

What is the “covenant—office” of the Holy Spirit?

* When we speak of the “covenant—office” of the Holy Spirit, the word “office” is used to express the several parts that the Father, Son and Holy Spirit each have undertaken in the Covenant of Grace. To help us understand the parts that each member of the Triune Godhead plays it is helpful to define two terms.
* When we speak of the “covenant—office” of the Holy Spirit we are speaking of the unique role of the Holy Spirit that neither the Father nor the Son have a part. “Just as Christ’s assumption of the “office” of “Servant” in no way tarnished or diminished His equality as the Son, so the Spirit’s free undertaking the office of applying the benefits of the Everlasting Covenant (the Covenant of Grace) to its beneficiaries, in no way detracts from His essential and personal honor and glory.”

**Ontological vs. Economic Trinity**

* “The word ‘office,’ then, as applied to the covenant-work of the Holy Spirit, denotes that which He graciously undertook to perform by way of stipulated engagement.”
* **Ontological Trinity**—Each person of the Trinity—the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit—is equal in nature and qualities. According to the teachings on the ontological Trinity, each of these three Persons share the same abilities, power, wisdom, strength, importance, and glory as the others. Another name for the ontological Trinity is the "essential Trinity.” In essence all three members of the Godhead are fully and equally divine.
* **Economic Trinity**- The economic Trinity has a different focus than the ontological Trinity. While the ontological Trinity focuses on who God is, the economic Trinity focuses on what God does.
  + By mutual agreement and divine will each member of the Godhead has specific roles or "offices."
  + The Father elects and justifies. He is the sender of the Son and the Holy Spirit into the world to accomplish the work of salvation. None of these "offices" is done by the Son or the Spirit.
  + The Son is the head of the church. He sacrificed Himself to make atonement for the sins of the elect. He is seated at the right hand of the Father and makes intercession for His own. The Father and Spirit do none of these functions.
  + The Spirit does the work of regeneration in our salvation. And following our conversion the Spirit performs the "office" of sanctifier in the chosen of God. Neither the Father nor the Son perform these covenant functions.

**The Covenant Office of the Holy Spirit in Salvation**

* “The ‘office-work’ of the Holy Spirit may be summed up in a single word . . . sanctification.”
* “The Spirit’s work of sanctification, begins at regeneration, when a new life is given, a new capacity imparted, a new desire awakened.”

Arthur Pink states that “without the Spirit’s sanctification, the redemption of Christ would avail no man.” Does this mean that sanctification is just as important as redemption?

* The office-role of each member of the Godhead is indispensable.
  + Without God the Father’s electing grace, none would be saved
  + Without the sacrifice of God the Son none would be saved.
  + And without the sanctifying work of the God the Spirit none would be saved.

“Sanctification is as indispensable as justification.” If there is no sanctification in a professing Christian there is no justification. There is no spiritual life.

**Is Regeneration Part of the Process of Sanctification?**

* Arthur Pink sees regeneration as the first event in the life-long process of sanctification. Regeneration is the specific event in which the dead soul is made alive by the quickening of the Spirit. And at that moment, when the dead man is made alive, the process of sanctification begins and will continue for the remainder of that new creation’s earthly life.
* Whether we agree that regeneration and sanctification should be viewed as separate events is debatable. But we agree that both must occur in order for new life to grow. Whether we choose to understand them as part of the same process or not does not change the fact that both must occur.

**Questions**

**What is the definition of the Ontological Trinity?**

* Ontology = philosophical term related to “the nature of being”
  + The ontological Trinity declares that all three members of the Godhead are equal is all respects of existence, nature and being.

**What is the definition of the Economic Trinity?**

* Economics = the allocation of resources
* The economic Trinity delineates the roles and offices that each member of the Godhead plays. Each member of the Godhead performs those functions that He, by mutual agreement is assigned to perform (elector, Savior, sanctifier, justifier, advocate, etc.)