

EQTH105 Basic Bible Doctrine

Unit 3 Reading 2 — Don Stewart

Does Scripture Teach that the Holy Spirit
Is Distinct from the Father?

Presented by the



LANCASTER BIBLE COLLEGE
CAPITAL SEMINARY & GRADUATE SCHOOL

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Don Stewart :: Does Scripture Teach that the Holy Spirit is a Distinct Person from God the Father?

The Trinity: One God in Three Persons – Question 9

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There are some people who do not see any distinction between God the Father and the Holy Spirit. The Holy Spirit is assumed to be another description of the Father, or the creative force that comes from the Father. What does the Bible teach on this subject? Does it teach that the Holy Spirit is merely an extension of the Father?

The Holy Spirit Is Distinct from the Father

God the Father and God the Holy Spirit are distinct. Indeed, the Scripture does make a clear distinction between God the Father, and the Holy Spirit. The evidence is as follows:

1. The Father Sent the Holy Spirit

To begin with, we find that the Bible says that God the Father sent the Holy Spirit. Jesus said that the Father would send the Spirit when the Son left the world.

“But when the Father sends the Counselor as my representative—and by the Counselor I mean the Holy Spirit—he will teach you everything and will remind you of everything I myself have told you.” ([John 14:26 NLT](#))

The Father will send the Holy Spirit, not Himself, to help believers. The job of the Holy Spirit is to teach believers of Jesus the Son.

2. The Holy Spirit Does the Father’s Will

The Holy Spirit is not the same as the Father rather He does the will of God the Father. Paul wrote to the Romans,

And God, who searches the heart, knows what is the mind of the Spirit, because the Spirit intercedes for the saints according to the will of God. ([Romans 8:27](#) NRSV)

The Holy Spirit intercedes for the believer. He is the one who allows us to talk to God the Father through God the Son. This is another indication of the distinction between the members of the Trinity. The Spirit is not the Father.

3. The Holy Spirit Is Mentioned with the Father and Son

Finally, there are a number of places where the Holy Spirit is mentioned in conjunction with the Father and the Son.

For example, in the Great Commission, we read that Jesus commanded that believers be baptized into the name of each Person of the Trinity. He said,

“Therefore go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you. And surely I am with you always, to the very end of the age.”
([Matthew 28:19](#), [20 NIV](#))

There are a number of similar passages where the Holy Spirit is mentioned together with God the Father and God the Son.

For example, the Holy Spirit is also mentioned as a distinct Person from the Father and Son in Paul's benediction:

The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, and the love of God, and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit, be with you all. ([2 Corinthians 13:14 NASB](#))

This is a further indication that each of them is a distinct personage.

Conclusion: The Father and the Holy Spirit Are Distinct Persons in the Trinity

The Holy Spirit is a distinct Person from God the Father; He is not merely an extension of the Father. The Holy Spirit is the Third Person of the Trinity while God the Father is the First Person. They are equal in nature, but have different roles.

Summary – Question 9

Does Scripture Teach That the Holy Spirit a Distinct Person from God the Father?

The Bible makes a distinction between the Holy Spirit and the Father. There are a number of ways which the Scriptures make this evident.

First, the Bible says that the Father sent the Holy Spirit into the world. This is talking about two distinct personages. The Holy Spirit did not send Himself.

In addition, the Holy Spirit does the will of the Father. We are specifically told that He does not do His own will. Clearly, they are not the same Person.

Finally, there are a number of places in the New Testament where the Holy Spirit is listed together with the Father and the Son. Since the Son and the Father are distinct personages, it stands to reason that the Holy Spirit, since He is mentioned together with them, is also a distinct personage.