

Introduction:

- Everyone likes receiving gifts! But when God gives you a gift it has to be special!
- *“Once when he was eating with them, he commanded them, “Do not leave Jerusalem until the Father sends you the gift he promised, as I told you before. John baptized with water, but in just a few days you will be baptized with the Holy Spirit.””* (Acts 1:4-5, NLT)
- *“Now he is exalted to the place of highest honor in heaven, at God’s right hand. And the Father, as he had promised, gave him the Holy Spirit to pour out upon us, just as you see and hear to-day.”* (Acts 2:33, NLT)
- Who is the Holy Spirit and how do we welcome Him into our lives that we may dwell in His presence?

I. **Who is the Holy Spirit?** He is not a blurry grayish ghost.

A. He is the third person of the trinity. He is God-God the Spirit.

1. As Father, God walked with Adam-Physically present.
2. As Jesus, God became flesh. Immanuel, God with us. If you have seen me you have seen the Father. When we see Jesus in the Bible we see the Father. Jesus made the Father tangible
3. As Holy Spirit, He is God with us and God in us.

B. The imagery of the Holy Spirit is varied.

1. He is referred to as wind. Gk word is *pnuema-meaning breath or wind*. God breathed into the man and he became a living being. But he is more than wind and breath.
 - a) Jesus uses the wind as an example in Jn 3:6-8 with Nicodemus. Jesus speaks of being born of the Spirit and begin to talk about the wind. *“You feel the wind, you see the effects of wind. But you do not know where it comes from or where it goes.”*
 - b) What Jesus is speaking of is the Presence of God.
2. The Holy Spirit is pictured as a Dove that rested upon Jesus after He was baptized. Dove was the symbolic peaceful presence of God resting on Jesus.
3. Acts 2 not only was he wind but he was fire. Speaks of cleansing sanctifying work of Holy Spirit.
4. He is also characterized as oil throughout the Word of God. Anointing on kings, and prophets. Zechariah 4 vision of the olive tree of heaven dripping oil.
5. All of this imagery is to symbolically help up understand the work of an invisible God now at work with in His people. What we need to know is this....

C. ***The Holy Spirit is a Person***

1. When the Apostle Paul speaks about the Holy Spirit almost all of his language is ‘experiential’ language. He does that to emphasize the Spirit’s activity.
2. The Holy Spirit is God’s ‘agent’ or activity in the earth.
 - a) Sanctifying work of the Spirit is Gods activity: 2 Thes 2:13; 1 Cor 6:11; Ro 15:16.
 - b) Revelation comes through the Spirit: 1 Cor 2:10; Eph 3:5.
 - c) Power of the Spirit: 1 Thes 1:5

- d) Prophecy is by the Spirit: 1Cor 12:3; 14:2, 16.
- e) All of these imply personhood or indicate personhood.
- 3. In Paul's writing the Spirit is the subject of a large number of verbs that demand the presence of a person. The Spirit:
 - a) searches all things 1 Cor 2:10
 - b) knows the mind of God 1 Cor 2:11
 - c) teaches believers 1 Cor 2:13
 - d) Dwells among and within believers 1 Cor 3:16; Ro 8:11; 2 Tim 1:14
 - e) accomplishes all things 1 Cor 12:11
 - f) gives life to those who believe 2 Cor 3:6
 - g) cries out from our hearts Gal 4:6
 - h) Leads us in the ways of God Gal 5:18; Ro 8:14
 - i) bears witness with our own spirits Ro 8:16
 - j) has desires in opposition to our flesh Gal 5:17
 - k) helps us Ro 8:2
 - l) intercedes in our behalf Ro 8:26-27
 - m) Works all things together for ultimate good. Ro 8:28
 - n) strengthens believers Eph 3:16
 - o) Is grieved by sinfulness Eph 4:30
 - p) Last but not least, the fruit of the Spirits indwelling are the personal attributes of God Gal 5:22-23.
 - q) God knows the mind of the Spirit and the Spirit in turn prays according to God's will--this is the language of personhood! AS A PERSON HE IS TO BE WELCOMED...

II. What Does It Mean To Welcome Him?

A. What is welcoming? Three concepts of welcoming:

1. **To accept**, receive as in receiving a gift
 - a) Luke 9:11 (NKJV) *But when the multitudes knew it, they followed Him; and He received them and spoke to them about the kingdom of God, and healed those who had need of healing.*
 - b) Luke 8:40 (NKJV) *So it was, when Jesus returned, that the multitude welcomed Him, for they were all waiting for Him.*
 - c) Acts 21:17 (NKJV) *And when we had come to Jerusalem, the brethren received us gladly.*
2. **"To receive,"** in the sense "to welcome," "to extend hospitality,"
 - a) Luke 10:38 (NKJV) *Now it happened as they went that He entered a certain village; and a certain woman named Martha welcomed Him into her house. Mary then sits at his feet and receives Him even further by 'hanging' onto every word He speaks.*

3. "To receive, hear, or understand what someone is saying" ie. Implies a **depth of relationship** and trust. **ie.** When guest speakers have stayed in our home-in conversations often you are taught and you hear, receive and understand. You are glad they are there and you receive from them with joy. Mk 4:20, the parable of the sower, Jesus speaks of those who hear, accept, bear fruit. They are welcoming the Word.
 - a) The meaning is "acceptance" with a sense of approval and appreciation. 1 Timothy 1:15 (NKJV) *This is a faithful saying and worthy of all acceptance, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners, of whom I am chief.* Worthy of acceptance is welcoming the Word.
- B. Welcoming works both ways. God approaches us. We welcome Him. And He then in return welcomes us. We welcome Him in our hearts, He welcomes us into his kingdom. We welcome Him into our homes He graciously abides as our guest-Favor! Luke 8:40, Luke 9:11

Conclusion:

- You must be born again.
- You receive the gift by faith.
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