

Introduction:

- In the Christian faith, one of our theological beliefs is in the Trinity. God the Father. God the Son. And God the Holy Spirit. We use the phrase the Three in One.
 - God the Father is fairly easy to understand because of the personal image it involves.
 - God the Son is even easier to understand because we have pictures, images, stories of this man called Jesus. Again, God the Son creates a personal image we can relate to.
 - God the Holy Spirit is a little more difficult to related to because He is called Spirit...Ghost. Most of the images associated with Him are Wind, Oil, Water (Rivers), Dove, etc.
 - Holy Spirit seems allusive, mysterious, vapor like.
 - It is way harder to relate to Him because our understanding fall way short of His personhood.
- I read recently of a man trying to portray to children the "reality" of the Spirit by blowing on a piece of paper and letting "fly" away. "The Spirit is like that." He said to the children. "He is like the wind, very real. Very real in His effects, even though He is invisible." At which a six year old alerted out, "But I want the wind to be un-invisible!" I think we all can relate to that six year old. I want the Holy Spirit to be un-invisible! So because we see His effects but never see Him we usually related to Him in non-personal terms: wind, water, dove, and oil.
 - Because Jesus is seen in scripture we have 'fleshed' Him out. (2 Cor. 3:18; 4:4, 6) Personhood.
 - Jesus said, If you have seen me you have seen the Father. (Jn 14:9) Personhood.
- The Holy Spirit is person and I want to talk about that today. And how understanding His personhood can add to our ability to welcome Him.

I. The Presence Makes All The Difference

- A. The presence of God makes a profound difference in your life. All through scripture we see this.
 1. Abraham became the father of many nations because of the Presence of God in His life.
 2. Moses led the children of Israel out of Egypt by the Presence of God. Cloud by day and fire by night.
 3. Elijah carried the Presence of God and he shut off the rain and turned on the rain because of the Presence.
- B. We must make room for the Presence of God in our lives.
 1. 2 Kings 4:8-14 Shunemite woman builds a room for Elisha. In return, her barrenness is removed. She built a room for the Presence. That is what she built!
 2. 2 Sam 6:10-13 David creates a place for the Presence of God.
 - a) David puts the ark on a cart. The Presence was meant to rest on the priest. You are kings and priests according to Peter. A man dies because he touched the Ark.

- b) David leaves the Ark at Obed Edom's house and Obed prospers while the Ark is there. Obed houses the Presence of God.
- C. Room is best made for a person when you want their presence.
 1. God walked with Adam in the cool of the day. Personhood.
 2. Moses and the Elders ate with God. *"But on the nobles of the children of Israel He did not lay His hand. So they saw God, and they ate and drank."* (Exodus 24:11, NKJV) Personhood.
 3. Moses spoke with God face to face as a man speaks with a friend. Ex 33:11 Personhood.
 4. David had a highly personal relationship with God. Psalms are filled with words and statements relating to God as a person.

II. The Holy Spirit is the Presence of God

- A. He is the third person of the trinity. He is God. He is God the Spirit. As Holy Spirit, He is God with us and God in us.
- B. 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. All of these activities imply personhood or indicate personhood.
 - a) Sanctifying work of the Spirit is God's 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: 1 Cor 12:3; 14:2, 16.
- C. Also in Paul's writing the Spirit is the subject of a large number of verbs that demand the presence of a person. The Spirit...
 1. searches all things 1 Cor 2:10
 2. knows the mind of God 1 Cor 2:11
 3. teaches believers 1 Cor 2:13
 4. dwells among and within believers 1 Cor 3:16; Ro 8:11; 2 Tim 1:14
 5. accomplishes all things 1 Cor 12:11
 6. gives life to those who believe 2 Cor 3:6
 7. cries out from our hearts Gal 4:6
 8. Leads us in the ways of God Gal 5:18; Ro 8:14
 9. bears witness with our own spirits Ro 8:16
 10. has desires in opposition to our flesh Gal 5:17
 11. helps us Ro 8:2
 12. intercedes in our behalf Ro 8:26-27
 13. Works all things together for ultimate good. Ro 8:28
 14. strengthens believers Eph 3:16
 15. Is grieved by sinfulness Eph 4:30

16. Last but not least, the fruit of the Spirits indwelling are the personal attributes of God Gal 5:22-23.
17. 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...

III. We Must Welcome the Presence of the Holy Spirit

- A. The more we understand and relate to Holy Spirit as person the better we will be able to welcome Him. When we welcome the Holy Spirit we are welcoming a person. Not a thing, or an it, or a bird. We are receiving a person willingly and with gladness.
 1. Webster 1828 Dictionary, welcome: 1. Received with gladness; admitted willingly to the house, entertainment and company; as a welcome guest. 2. Grateful; pleasing; 3. Free to have or enjoy gratuitously.
 2. What is welcoming? Three concepts of welcoming:
 - a) To accept, receive. IE. as in receiving a gift
 - (1) 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.*
 - (2) Luke 8:40 (NKJV) *So it was, when Jesus returned, that the multitude welcomed Him, for they were all waiting for Him.*
 - (3) Acts 21:17 (NKJV) *And when we had come to Jerusalem, the brethren received us gladly.*
 3. "To receive," in the sense "to welcome," "to extend hospitality,"¹
 - 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.
 4. "To receive, hear, or understand what someone is saying"² 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. The Holy Spirit longs to be welcomed into our lives that He may speak of the Father and the Son.

¹ Kittel, G., Friedrich, G., & Bromiley, G. W. (1985). *Theological Dictionary of the New Testament* (146). Grand Rapids, MI: W.B. Eerdmans.

² Kittel, G., Friedrich, G., & Bromiley, G. W. (1985). *Theological Dictionary of the New Testament* (146). Grand Rapids, MI: W.B. Eerdmans.

- 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!
1. We welcome God Luke 8:40
 2. God welcomes us Luke 9:11
- C. How do we welcome the Holy Spirit? When we are dealing with the Holy Spirit, we must always realize that we are dealing with the personal presence of God.
1. Because the Holy Spirit is a person we must welcome Him
 - a) He may come and knock on our door. We must welcome Him in because of who He is.
 - b) Or we may be the one taking the initiative and invite him into...
 - c) In either case we are accepting Him, receiving Him, and longing to enjoy and hear from him.
 2. We must treat him as guest and not as a visitor/stranger.
 - a) UPS person or Fed Ex person/sales person/peddler comes to the door. They are a stranger and will not be invited in. They will be told to stand at the door and wait. When we do not know the Holy Spirit is the person of God, he is a stranger and we leave him outside-our heart, our home, ministry, business.
 - b) Visitor - we may know them, know who they are, but they are only allowed so far into your home. They could be allowed to stand at the door, or maybe even allowed to come and sit in an area to talk. But they are not welcomed. They are there for business, travel, duty, or friendship.
 - c) A guest is a person who receives hospitality, a person who spends some time at another person's home in some social activity, as a visit, dinner, or party. They enter and are welcomed. "You are welcome to stay, make yourself at home, would you like something to eat or drink?" "Come lets sit and talk." It is not about business it is about them, you, and your relationship.
 3. We must learn to listen to Him.
 - a) He speaks to us in terms that we understand. Very personable.
 4. We must learn to talk to Him.

Conclusion:

- The Holy Spirit is a person therefore I must get to know Him.