

34

Reasons Why The
Holy Spirit Is Not A
Separate “Person”
From The Only
True God, The Father.

The Living Truth Fellowship
www.TLTF.org

Unless otherwise noted, Scripture is taken from the King James Version.

Scripture quotations marked (NIV) are taken from the Holy Bible New International Version® (NIV®), © 1973, 1978, 1984 by International Bible Society. Used by permission of Zondervan. All rights reserved.

Scripture quotations marked (NRSV) are taken from the New Revised Standard Version Bible, © 1989, Division of Christian Education of the National Council of the Churches of Christ in the United States of America. Used by permission. All rights reserved.

Scripture quotations marked (NASB) are taken from the New American Standard Bible®, © 1960, 1962, 1963, 1968, 1971, 1972, 1973, 1975, 1977, 1995 by The Lockman Foundation Used by permission.

Scripture quotations marked (YLT) are taken from Young's Literal Translation, by Robert Young, 1898.

The sacred name of God, Yahweh, is indicated by "LORD."

©1999, 2011

Revised by: John A. Lynn

© 2011 The Living Truth Fellowship

All rights reserved. No part of this book may be reproduced, stored in a retrieval system, or transmitted in any form or by any means, electronic, mechanical, photocopying, recording or otherwise, without the prior written permission of the publisher, except in the case of brief quotations embodied in critical articles and reviews, academic papers, and other non-commercial uses. For more information contact us at the address below.

This book was originally written by Mark Graeser, John Schoenheit, and John Lynn while they all worked together in ministry. They are now working in separate ministries, and the one with which John Lynn is now affiliated is The Living Truth Fellowship, Ltd., by whom this book is now being re-published.

God bless you as you take this step in your journey of coming unto a knowledge of the truth.

To receive our monthly newsletter, *FRUIT OF D'VINE*, and to be put on our mailing list, contact us at:

The Living Truth Fellowship

7399 N. Shadeland Ave., Suite 252

Indianapolis, IN 46250

Phone: (317) 721-4046

Email: admin@tltf.org

Website: www.tltf.org

YouTube Channel: www.youtube.com/justtruthit

Vimeo Channel: www.vimeo.com/JustTruthIt

Country of origin the United States of America.

The doctrine of the Trinity depends upon the reality of a “third person” called “the Holy Spirit” to complete a supposed multi-personal Godhead. Without such a separate person who is “co-eternal” and “co-equal” with the Father and the Son, the “Triune” God disintegrates. It is therefore wise to consider the reasons why this idea is not supported by logical scrutiny nor the weight of scriptural evidence.

Before exploring the reasons why this teaching is not biblically sound, we should first consider its practical consequences. We must obviate the common objections that we are merely splitting hairs over unprovable doctrines, that truth is not at stake, and that one teaching is equivalent to another as long as each is sincerely believed and God is approached with humility and love. It is our assertion that the teaching that the “Holy Spirit” is a “person” separate from God, the Father, is not true and results in some serious practical disadvantages to living the Christian life, namely:

a. Confusion about the distinction between “the Giver” and “the gift” results in misunderstanding of many verses of Scripture that become unintelligible, and the truth is exchanged for a man-made myth.

b. A lack of recognition of the permanence of the gift of holy spirit in the life of a believer results from the confusion about the coming and going of a “person.”¹

c. Worship, praise, prayer, song, and liturgy are directed toward an imaginary “third person” in the traditional Christian “Godhead,” but it ought to be directed primarily to God, the Father, and secondarily to the Lord Jesus Christ. The **only true God, the Father**, seeks those who will worship Him “...in spirit and in truth [reality]...” (John 4:23), in other words, worship Him for who He really is.

1. See our booklet: *25 Reasons Why Salvation is Permanent for Christians*.

d. Improperly discerning and understanding what the gift of holy spirit is, many Christians naively assume that virtually all spiritual manifestations are from the true God, and too often fail to discern the genuine from the counterfeit, and are therefore led into error.²

e. Failing to understand that "...the spirits of the prophets are subject to the prophets," (1 Cor. 14:32) and instead being taught to be "controlled" by the Holy Spirit, many become influenced by demons, even while thinking that they are being "led by the spirit" of God.

f. Many are not walking in the power of the spirit because they are waiting for a "person" to move them, while God is waiting for them to utilize by faith that which they have already been given.

We are now ready to examine the principal reasons for denying the Trinitarian assertion that "the Holy Spirit" is a separate person from the Father, the One God of Scripture. These are drawn from our own ruminations and from the work of James H. Broughton and Peter J. Southgate (*The Trinity: True or False?* 1995), Anthony Buzzard (*The Doctrine of the Trinity; Christianity's Self-Inflicted Wound*, 1994), Charles Morgridge (*The True Believer's Defense*, 1837), Fredric A. Farley (*The Scripture Doctrine of the Father, Son and Holy Ghost*, 1873) and *The Racovian Catechism* (1609). For an expanded and in-depth treatment of the subject of Trinitarianism and biblical Unitarianism, see our book *One God & One Lord: Reconsidering the Cornerstone of the Christian Faith*.

(1) God is said to have a throne (1 Kings 22:19; Dan. 7:9), inhabit heaven as His dwelling place (1 Kings 8:30, 39, 43, and 49), and yet "...heaven and the heavens of heaven cannot contain thee..." (1 Kings 8:27). So how can He be said to have a throne and a dwelling place and yet be uncontainable? Psalm 139:7 indicates that God's *spirit* and His *presence* can be equivalent terms. God is therefore

2. See our book: *The Gift of Holy Spirit: The Power to be like Christ*.

omnipresent by His “spirit,” which is not a separate “person.” This presence can also be extended by His personal ministers and agents, whether Christ, angels, or believers. None of these is a separate person who is also “God” in some multi-personal Godhead, but rather each is an empowered agent who is equipped to do the will of God.

(2) Exodus 23:20-22 mentions the angel of God’s presence that would go before Israel in the wilderness. God has permitted angels to speak as if they were God Himself, and even to use His personal name, “YAHWEH.” A few examples of this principle are Manoah and his wife (Judg. 13:21 and 22), Jacob wrestling (Gen. 32:24-30; Hosea 12:3-5), Moses (Exod. 3:2-4, 6, and 16) and Gideon (Judg. 6:12, 13, 16, and 22). What is sometimes attributed to Jesus or to “the Holy Spirit” in the Old Testament is better explained by this principle of God manifesting Himself by means of an angelic messenger who speaks for Him in the first person (“I the LORD,” etc.) and manifests His glory.

(3) Though the Hebrew word for “spirit” (*ruach*), can refer either to angels or evil spirits, which are persons or entities with a personality, the Hebrew usage of “the spirit of God” never refers to a person separate from, but a part of, God Almighty. Neither does the phrase, “the spirits of God” occur, which would refer to separate spiritual entities within a multipersonal God.

a. Zechariah 6:5 refers to the “...four spirits of the heavens...” riding in chariots, but the NIV text note supplies an alternate reading of “winds” for “spirit,” which makes more sense in the context—the four winds of heaven going North, East, etc.).

b. Revelation 1:4 refers to the “seven Spirits” before the throne of God. Are these seven “Holy Spirits,” or sentient entities, within the “Godhead?” The context provides the answer: they are the seven flaming torches before the throne (4:5 - NRSV) and the seven horns and seven eyes of the slain Lamb (5:6). These are likely the same “spirits” mentioned in Isaiah 11:2 in connection with the Messiah: the spirit of the LORD, the spirit of wisdom, the spirit of understanding, the spirit of

counsel, the spirit of power, the spirit of knowledge, and the spirit of the fear of the LORD. These “spirits” are undoubtedly symbols of the intense power of insight and judgment with which the Lamb will judge and reign over the earth during the Millenium.

(4) As with the Hebrew word *ruach*, the Greek word for spirit (*pneuma*) also has many different meanings, the correct one also being determinable only from the context of each occurrence. Although Greek has both upper and lower case letters, the early manuscripts employed either one or the other. Therefore, no accurate distinction can be made in the original manuscripts of the Bible between upper case “Holy Spirit,” a proper noun referring to God, and lower case “holy spirit,” referring to an impersonal force. Compounding the problem is the fact that the article “the” was often added by translators, leading the reader to think that “*the* Holy Spirit” is referring to a separate person, a third person of “the Holy Trinity” as taught by traditional Christian orthodoxy.

(5) Scholars admit that the concept of the Trinity cannot be substantiated in the Old Testament. In particular, “the Holy Spirit” as any kind of independent or distinct entity has no place in Old Testament revelation. Therefore, they say, the concept must be derived from the New Testament. With the exception of a few comparatively difficult verses in the gospel of John that are often misunderstood, the New Testament also gives no certain and incontrovertible indication of a “Holy Spirit” as a personal being co-equal with the Father and the Son. This is a rather glaring omission if the Triune God is supposed to provide the foundation of Christian orthodoxy, yet the “tri-unity” of God cannot be clearly established even with New Testament revelation. Thus it makes sense to understand “Holy Spirit” in the New Testament just as it was understood in the Old Testament, either as God Himself or His presence and power.

(6) The Greek word for “spirit,” *pneuma*, is neuter, as are all pronouns referring to the spirit, making them necessarily impersonal. New Testament translators knew this grammatically, but groundlessly translated references to the coming “spirit of truth” as “he” instead of

“it” because of their Trinitarian prejudice (e.g., John 14:17). If they had consistently translated the neuter pronouns of John 14 through 16 as “it,” “its,” and “itself” instead of “he,” “his,” and “him,” the case for the “personality of the Holy Spirit” would largely disappear from Christian belief. Such a major theological doctrine with such important implications for foundational Christian theology cannot depend on a few pronouns, but rather should be founded upon the weight of the biblical evidence considered as a whole, apart from tradition and prejudice.

(7) Any translation from one language to another must recognize the relative unimportance of gender. For the most part, languages that assign a gender to nouns do so in a rather arbitrary manner. For instance, the Spanish word for car is masculine, *el carro*, while a bicycle is feminine, *la bicicleta*. Yet no one would translate it into English as “the car, he...” or “the bicycle, she...” Either word would require the neuter “it” to reflect the impersonal nature of the object. A writer or a poet might employ such a figurative expression in the use of pronouns, but any reader acquainted with the objects referred to would recognize the figure of speech employed. Such poetic **personification** is employed in reference to “the Comforter.”

(8) The figure of speech **personification** is common in Scripture, and is defined as attributing *personal* qualities, feelings, actions, etc., to things that have no real personality or personal consciousness. Wisdom is personified as such in Proverbs 8 and 9, yet no sensible person would seriously consider that a literal *person* named “Wisdom” helped God create the world (Prov. 8:29 and 30). The spirit of God is personified as “the Comforter” in John 14:16 and 26, 15:26 and 16:7. Therefore, personal pronouns are appropriate to agree with the personal nature of the figurative title. It is clear from John 16:13 that this Comforter is “*sent*,” “does “not speak of himself” and is instructed (“...whatsoever he shall hear, *that* shall he speak...”).

(9) The “Comforter,” more properly translated as “Counselor,” (NIV) is said by Jesus to fill the void created by his going to the Father (John 14:12). By this spirit he would still be present: “...I will

come to you” (14:18); “I am in you” (14:20 - NIV); and I will “show myself” (14:21 - NIV). By this spirit his work with them would continue: It “will teach you”(14:26 - NIV); It “...will remind you of everything I have said...” (14:26 - NIV); It “will testify about me” (15:26 - NIV); It “...will convict the world of guilt...” (in preparation for his judgment—16:8 - NIV); It “...will guide you into all truth...” (16:13 - NIV); It “...will bring glory to me by taking what is mine and making it known to you” (16:14 - NIV).

All of these statements point to the role of the gift of holy spirit in continuing the work that Jesus started, and even empowering his followers for greater works. This spirit is not independent and self-existent, but is “the mind of Christ” within the believer, influencing, guiding, teaching, reminding, and pointing the believer to follow his Lord and Savior. This spirit is certainly not “co-equal” when by its very design it serves the risen Lord and Christ. Yet because it carries the *personal* presence of Christ into the life of every believer, the use of **personification** is highly appropriate. As a practical matter, holy spirit in us will not lead us anywhere that the Lord himself would not lead us if he were personally present. We can study Christ’s life and his priorities in the written Word to verify whether the “spirit” leading us in is fact the spirit of the Lord Jesus Christ or whether it is “another spirit.” For instance, he whose basic commitment was “it is written” will not be leading his followers away from relying on Scripture as the only rule of faith and practice.

(10) The “soul” or the “spirit” of *man* is as often personified like the spirit of *God* is. “Why art thou cast down, O my soul?...” (Ps. 42:5). “...I will say to my soul, Soul, thou hast much goods laid up...” (Luke 12:19). “...The spirit indeed *is* willing...” (Matt. 26:41). The “spirit” of Titus “was refreshed” (2 Cor. 7:13). Yet no one would argue that the “spirit of man” is a separate person from the man himself. The figure of speech **personification** is universally and readily recognized, and in the case of “the Comforter” ought to be recognized as well.

(11) The spirit of man bears the same relation to man as the spirit of God bears to God (1 Cor. 2:11). As the spirit of man is not another

person distinct from himself, but his human consciousness or mind by which he is able to be self-aware and contemplate things peculiar to himself, so the spirit of God is not another person distinct from God. It is that consciousness and intelligence that is essential and peculiar to Him whereby He manifests and reveals Himself to man. As the spirit of man means the man himself (the essence of a man is his *mind*), so the spirit of God means God Himself. The parallel usage of mind and spirit is seen in the Apostle Paul's citation of Isaiah 40:13 (NRSV) ("Who has directed the spirit of the LORD, or as his counselor has instructed him?") and in Romans 11:34 and 1 Corinthians 2:16 where "spirit" is rendered "mind."

(12) If the "Spirit of truth" in John 14:17 is a person, then "the spirit of error" in 1 John 4:6 must also be a person, since the two are directly contrasted. The fact is that each "spirit" represents an influence or a power under which a person acts, but neither is a person in itself.

(13) 1 Corinthians 2:12 directly contrasts the "spirit of the world" with "...the spirit which is of God..." As the "spirit of the world" is not a person separate from "the world," neither is the "spirit of God" a person separate from God. Each is an influence emanating from a source that produces certain attitudes, behaviors, or "fruit."

(14) The "breath" of God and the "spirit" of God are synonymous terms (Job 4:9 - NIV; Ps. 33:6, 104:29 and 30; John 3:8; Job 27:3). It is as inconceivable that the breath of God could be a person distinct from God as that the breath of a human could be a person distinct from a human. It is especially absurd to speak of one self-existent and eternal person as "the breath" of another such person.

(15) The "spirit of God" is synonymous with the "hand" and "the finger" of God (Ezek. 3:14; Job 26:13; Ps. 8:3; Matt. 12:28; Luke 11:20). It is nonsense to call a "co-equal and co-eternal person" the "hand" and "finger" of another such person. In fact, as a man's hand and finger are subordinate and submissive to the will of a man, so the spirit of God is subordinate to the will of God. As what is done by the hand of a man is done by the man himself, so what is done by the

spirit of God is done by God Himself. His spirit is His will in action, performing that which He “sends” it to perform.

(16) The “spirit of your Father” is synonymous with “the holy spirit,” and is said to speak in our stead on certain occasions when we might be brought before men for possible persecution or trial (Matt.10:19 and 20; Mark 13:11; Luke 12:11 and 12). On the same topic, Luke 21:15 says that Christ will give us “...a mouth and wisdom, which all your adversaries shall not be able to gainsay nor resist.” Rather than saying that a person called “the Holy Ghost” will speak through us, these verses teach that we will be inspired by the supernatural power of God and Christ to speak as they give us guidance.

(17) If the spirit is a sentient (able to sense, be self-aware), separate and distinct being with personality, then Jesus either did not know this or was very inconsistent in giving “Him” proper due. In Matthew 11:27, Jesus asserts that “...no man knoweth the Son, but the Father; neither knoweth any man the Father, save the Son...” If “the Holy Spirit” is a person distinct from the Father, and is also omniscient and almighty “God,” then would He not also have to know the Father and the Son? Jesus’ statement, then, would not have been true, and in fact would be a lie.

The same is true for Jesus’ assertion in Matthew 24:36 that *no one* knew the hour of his Second Coming except the Father. How could “the Holy Spirit” be kept in the dark about this very important prophetic event? Are we to believe that it is possible for one member of the Godhead to keep a secret from another member while sharing the same eternal and divine “essence” of “Godself”?

(18) If the spirit of God is a unique and separate person, and having “spirit” is prerequisite to having a unique and separate personality, then the person called “the Spirit of God” must have his own “spirit” peculiar to himself and distinct from the Father and Son. We would then be forced to the absurd belief in “the spirit of the Spirit.” If “the Holy Spirit” has no spirit of His own, then He could not be said to have a separate “personality.”

If “God” is three co-equal persons, the third person can no more be “the spirit” of the first person, than the first person can be “the spirit” of the third person. To avoid this absurdity, “the spirit of God” cannot have a separate personality, but must be the power, influence, sufficiency, fullness, or some extension of the Father, the real and unitary person called *the one true God*.

(19) The spirit of God is said to be divisible and able to be distributed. God took of the spirit that was upon Moses and put it upon the 70 elders of Israel (Num. 11:17–25). Joel 2:28, quoted by Peter on the day of Pentecost, says that God “...will pour out of my Spirit...” (Acts 2:17). Understood literally, the Greek says “some of,” or “part of” my spirit.” The footnote in Weymouth’s translation reads “literally ‘of’ or ‘from’ my spirit—a share or portion.” Though we cannot conceive of how a *person* might be so divided, we can understand that the spirit of God, as the *power* of God, might be distributed among many. 1 John 4:13 echoes this truth in saying, “We know that we live in him and he in us, because he has given us **of his Spirit**” (NIV).

(20) Many words associated with God’s spirit give it the attributes of a liquid, which by definition cannot refer to a person. This liquid language is consistent with the spirit being His presence and power. We are baptized (literally “dipped”) with and in it like water (Matt. 3:11; Acts 1:5). We are all made to “drink” from the same spirit, as from a well or fountain (1 Cor. 12:13). It is written on our hearts like ink (2 Cor. 3:3). We are “anointed” with it, like oil (Acts 10:38; 2 Cor. 1:21 and 22; 1 John 2:27). We are “sealed” with it as with melted wax (Eph. 1:13). It is “poured out” on us (Acts 10:45; Rom. 5:5 - NIV). It is “measured” as if it had volume (2 Kings 2:9; John 3:34). We are to be “filled” with it (Acts 2:4; Eph. 5:18). This “filling” is to capacity at the New Birth and to overflowing as we act according to its influence.

Even the use of spirit as “wind” implies liquidity, for air masses behave as a fluid, flowing from areas of higher to lower pressure. All this figurative language must be designed to point us to the truth that the spirit of God is the invisible power and influence of God. It comes

into our lives to buoy us up, to help us, to comfort us, to unite us, and anoint us for the work to which He has called us. As liquid seeks the lowest level, so the spirit of God comes to us in our lowly and needy state, beneath our sins and iniquities, our faults, and our failures to lift us up to stand in all the grace and truth that Christ brought.

(21) The “holy spirit” is clearly said to be given by God to men. A divine “person” cannot be given or bestowed by another divine person, because to be given is to be under the authority of another. If “the Holy Spirit” is co-equal with the Father, He cannot be under His authority.

(22) By definition, the spirit of God is derived *from* God. What comes *from* God as its source cannot also *be* “God,” without the term “God” being reduced to a formless and incomprehensible abstraction. Nothing and no one can be both a source of a thing and the thing itself.

(23) In biblical usage, “the Holy Spirit” is a synonymous term for “God.” In Acts 5:3 (NIV), Peter says Ananias lied to “the Holy Spirit.” In verse 4 Peter says he lied to “God.” This is an example of the common Semitic parallelism of equivalent terms, and is not evidence that Ananias lied to two separate persons. If that were the case, why would verse 4 not say that Peter lied to “the Father” instead of to “God.” Neither is this parallelism evidence that another divine person called “the Holy Spirit” is also “God” and therefore part of a triune “Godhead.”

(24) “The holy spirit” is equivalent to “...the power of the Most High...” as Luke 1:35 (NIV) clearly indicates by another use of parallelism (cp. Luke 24:49; Acts 1:8, 10:38; Rom. 15:13, 18 and 19; 1 Cor. 2:4 and 5). The context is the conception of Jesus Christ. Matthew 1:18 (NIV) also records that Mary “...was found to be with child through ‘the Holy Spirit.’” Yet all through the New Testament are references to the fact that *God* is the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ. If “God” is “the Father,” and “the Holy Spirit” is also “the father” of the baby Jesus, we have the potential for a paternity suit. Trinitarianism leads to much unnecessary confusion by asserting a

separate personality of “the Holy Ghost,” and cannot explain away the logical conclusion that according to that view the Son has *two* “Fathers,” or two separate persons fathering Jesus.

(25) The “Holy Spirit” (properly “the gift of holy spirit”) is used synonymously and interchangeably with “The Spirit of the Lord...” (Luke 4:18, etc.); “...the Spirit of his Son...” (Gal. 4:6); “... the Spirit of Jesus Christ” (Phil. 1:19). We have access to the Father by the spirit (Eph. 2:18); in Christ and through faith in him we have access with confidence to God (Eph. 3:12).

(26) Many Trinitarians assert that “the Holy Spirit” comes and permanently dwells within a believer when he accepts Jesus Christ as his Savior. But many also teach that the Holy Spirit comes upon a believer *after* he is born again. They also pray for “the Holy Spirit” to attend their meetings, and welcome “Him” to come as He desires. This puts them in the difficult position of having to explain how a Christian can have the person of “the Holy Spirit” simultaneously dwelling in him and also coming and going from Christian meetings.

The simple answer to this dilemma is that there are two usages of “the spirit” that must be distinguished. One is “the gift of God’s nature that is permanently received when a person is born again.” The other is “the power and influence of God” as He manifests His presence in His Creation (Gen. 1:1) and among His people (2 Chron. 5:14). In contrast to the permanent gift, this can wax and wane according to the faith of those present and the will of God in the situation. The gift of God’s nature, holy spirit, is not always being energized into manifestation. God, “the Holy Spirit,” (the Giver) energizes the spirit within believers as they act in faith (Acts 2:4).

(27) John 7:39 says that the Holy Spirit was not yet given, and in Acts 1:4 and 5 (NIV) Jesus tells his disciples to wait for “...the gift my Father promised...” that would come “in a few days.” If the Holy Spirit is a person, and He was present in the Old Testament, then how is it possible for Him to be spoken of as “not yet given.” It is also confusing to contemplate how the gift of a “person” is even possible,

and the only answer Trinitarians can provide is that this is part of the “mystery” of the Trinity.

This “mystery” is solved when we understand that the spirit of God we receive is not a separate person, but rather the gift of God to empower His people. In the Old Testament, this empowering was temporal, hence David could pray that it not be removed from him (Ps. 51:11). It was also measured out differently to different people, hence Elisha could pray to receive a “double portion” (2 Kings 2:9). It was not given to all, and therefore its presence was noteworthy (Gen. 41:38). Since Pentecost, when the spirit was said to have “come,” it is now in all believers permanently and without measure, as it had been given to Jesus Christ. He who had the spirit “without measure” (John 3:34 – NASB), enabling him to do his Messianic work, poured out this same spirit on Pentecost (Acts 2:33 - NIV). And it is he, the true Baptizer, who fills each believer who comes to him for salvation (Matt. 3:11; Eph. 1:23).

(28) The only verse that could possibly indicate that there might be three persons sharing one name is Matthew 28:19: “... baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost.” This verse is quoted in a different form by the early Church Fathers, notably Eusebius (340 A.D.), who quotes the verse at least 18 times as follows: “baptizing them in my name.” This agrees with the testimony of the book of Acts and Paul’s Epistles, which associate only the name of Jesus Christ with baptism. Even if the verse reads as found in modern versions today, it does not validate the “Holy Spirit” being a separate person from God.

Arguments from Omission

(29) The Holy Spirit is never worshiped as are the Father and the Son, neither does any verse of Scripture command such worship. This is surprising if the Holy Spirit is truly a co-equal and co-eternal member of a triune “God” worthy of worship. If “God” is worthy of worship, and “God” exists in three persons, then shouldn’t each “God” person be worthy of worship? Then why is this idea not found in Scripture?

(30) In the opening of their New Testament Epistles, every one of the writers identifies himself with God the Father and the Lord Jesus Christ, but not one does so with “the Holy Spirit.” If they were ignorant of the truth of a “tri-personal” God, and this truth constitutes the foundation of the Christian faith, then their Apostleship was incomplete at best, and at worst they were teaching error. Their failure to clearly teach a three-person Godhead proves the assertion that the doctrine of the tri-personal God and a third person in an eternal Godhead was not believed or practiced by the Apostles. In fact, the doctrine was not codified until the fourth century in the Athanasian Creed.³ Since it was not believed nor practiced by the Apostles, and the Apostles were commissioned by the Lord Jesus himself, then it is logical to assert that the doctrine was neither believed nor practiced by the Lord Jesus either.

(31) Lacking sufficient Scriptural justification, the orthodox view of “the Holy Spirit” was fully developed in the fourth century after Christ and the Apostles, contemporaneously with the rise of Neoplatonic philosophy,⁴ which posited an abstract God “beyond being,” in which a variety of divine persons could be “one” in “essence.” This was basically a regurgitation of Gnostic philosophy,⁵ which had been vigorously opposed by the first-century Apostles but later embraced by many of the “Church Fathers” who helped to establish “orthodoxy.”

(32) In the Church Epistles [Romans through Thessalonians], the Apostle Paul sends personal greetings from “God the Father and the Lord Jesus Christ.” If “the Holy Spirit” were an integral and personal part of a triune Godhead, then why does “He” not send “His” personal greetings as well? The only good answer is that there is no such person, for, as an inspired writer of Scripture, Paul was on intimate talking terms with God and the Lord Jesus. If there were a third person involved, wouldn’t Paul have surely known

3. See our book: *One God & One Lord: Reconsidering the Cornerstone of the Christian Faith*, Appendix C, for the entire text of the Athanasian creed.

4. *Ibid.*, see Chapter 16, for more on Neoplatonism.

5. *Ibid.*, see Chapter 16, for more on Gnosticism

about it and included “Him” in his greetings to the churches? When Paul does include additional persons in his greetings, salutations and adjurations, he names “the elect angels,” not “the Holy Spirit” (1 Tim. 5:21; cp. Luke 9:26 and Rev. 3:5)

(33) In the NIV translation, Philippians 2:1 and 2 refers to “fellowship **with** the Spirit,” yet 1 John 1:3 says that “...our fellowship *is* with the Father, and with his Son Jesus Christ.” Why is the Holy Spirit left out? A better translation of Philippians 2:1 is the Young’s Literal Translation (YLT), which renders the phrase “fellowship of spirit,” pointing to the fellowship among believers who share a common spirit and who therefore ought to be able to get along with each other.

(34) In the eternal city of Revelation 21 and 22, both God and Jesus Christ are prominently featured. Each is pictured as sitting on his throne (Rev. 22:1). If “the Holy Spirit” is a “co-eternal” member of a triune Godhead, it is strange indeed that He seems to have no seat of authority on the final throne. This is consistent with the biblical truth that **there is one God, the Father, and one Lord, Jesus Christ**, and no such separate person known as “the Holy Spirit.

By restoring the Father to His unique and singular position as God, we give Him all the worship, credit, respect, and awe He deserves as the **one true God**. By restoring Christ to his position as The Man accredited by God, the only-begotten Son of the Father, the Last Adam, the one who could have sinned but voluntarily stayed obedient, the one who could have given up but loved us so much that he never quit, the one whom God highly exalted to be our Lord, we give Jesus Christ all the worship, credit, respect, and awe that he deserves, and we can draw great strength and determination from his example.

Further Study Material

Other Books, Booklets, and Audio Teaching Seminars available from:

The Living Truth Fellowship

Address, phone number, and email are listed on inside of front cover.

Books

[The Gift of Holy Spirit: The Power To Be Like Christ](#)

[Is There Death After Life?](#)

[Don't Blame God! A Biblical Answer to the Problem of Evil, Sin, and Suffering](#)

[One God & One Lord: Reconsidering the Cornerstone of the Christian Faith](#)

Booklets

[Beyond a Reasonable Doubt: 23 Arguments for the Historical Validity of the Resurrection of Jesus Christ](#)

[How To Eliminate Apparent Bible Contradictions](#)

[23 Reasons to Believe in a Rapture before the Great Tribulation](#)

[25 Reasons Why Salvation is Permanent for Christians](#)

[47 Reasons Why our Heavenly Father has no Equals or "Co- Equals"](#)

[What Is True Baptism?](#)

Audio Teaching Seminars available free on our web site:

[Romans](#) (18 hrs.)

[Jesus Christ, the Diameter of the Ages](#) (6 hrs.)

What Is The Living Truth Fellowship?

The Living Truth Fellowship is an international community of Christian believers connected by the love of God, the spirit of God, and a common belief of the truth as it is revealed in the written Word of God. We desire to make known that truth to as many people as possible. As a legal entity, we are a non-profit, tax-exempt United States (Indiana) corporation: The Living Truth Fellowship, Ltd.

The name of our ministry contains an intentional double entendre. The Word of God is the truth (John 17:17), and because it contains the very life of God (Eph. 4:18), it is the living truth (John 6:63; Heb. 4:12). As such, the word “living” is an adjective. But God intends that His truth be practiced, that is, He wants us to make “living” a verb by being living epistles of His truth. In that sense, being “verbal” means more than just speaking the Word; it also means doing it.

Our Father desires that we put His truth in our “inner parts” (Ps. 51:6) so that we might not sin against Him (Ps. 119:11). God looks on the heart of each person, and He does not measure the quality of one’s life by how much Bible he knows, but by how much knowledge of the truth he practices in his relationships, that is, how much of the heart of God does he manifest. We can objectively measure the quality of our lives by the quality of our relationships with people (Mark 12:28–31; 1 John 4:20 and 21).

Jesus Christ is our supreme example. In John 17:17, he said: “your word is truth,” and he exerted a lifelong effort to learn it precisely. But Jesus also LIVED the truth so flawlessly that he could say, I AM the truth (John 14:6). In other words, he BE true. And those are the two sides of the coin of truth, if you will: doctrinal and practical, propositional and relational. Without both sides, that coin won’t spend, that is, people won’t “buy” what we have to offer.

Our mission is to provide accurate biblical teaching so as to make known the Lord Jesus Christ, The Living Truth, and thus facilitate a worldwide community of mature Christians committed to following him by living the truth of God’s Word and sharing it with others.

We accomplish that mission by way of live teachers, camps and conferences for all ages and categories of people, books, newsletters, audio and video teachings, and internet outreach via our website. Those who choose to partake of and participate in these aspects of our ministry are free to utilize our resources as they see fit, whether by starting their own local fellowship or using our work in an already established group of Christians. Our goal is to provide avenues for individual Christians to exercise their unique callings in the Body of Christ.

The basis of all our belief and practice is the Bible, which is the revealed Word of God, flawless in its original writing by those 40 or so believers who wrote during a period of about 1500 years “...as they were moved by the Holy Spirit” (2 Pet. 1:21 - NKJV). An honest look at the Bible reveals a coherence that is impossible for those writers to have achieved by collaboration. So-called “errors” or “contradictions” are due to man’s subsequent interference in the transmission of the text, or to mistranslations, or to misunderstandings of what is written. We seek truth rather than the religious traditions of men.

Our goal in setting forth the Scriptures is to enable each believer to understand them for himself so he can develop his own convictions, become an effective communicator of God’s Word, and fulfill his individual ministry in the Body of Christ. Jesus said that knowing the truth would set one free (John 8:32), and our teachings have practical benefit in terms of one’s quality of life—spiritually, mentally, emotionally, and physically.

One of our goals is to teach the Word to “...faithful men who are able to teach others also” (2 Tim. 2:2 - NKJV). We plan to produce seminars and courses of study whereby those who so choose can become able ministers of the Gospel of Jesus Christ. We will ordain to Christian ministry those whom our faith community recognizes as meeting this criterion, whether by training in our ministry or via an ordination they received elsewhere that we recognize.