

“The Third Person of the Godhead”

Mrs. White wrote, ***“The prince of the power of evil can only be held in check by the power of God in the third person of the Godhead, the Holy Spirit.”*** (SpTA 37 [1897])

We conclude that since the Holy Spirit is the third Person of the Godhead, then the Father must be the first Person of the Godhead and the Son, the second Person of the Godhead. We also know Father and Son are divine Beings, so the tendency of the finite human mind is to automatically decide that the Holy Spirit must be a third divine Being. In spite of evidence to the contrary, we close our minds to any other explanation, much to the pleasure of the arch-deceiver. We will examine the evidence with our spiritual microscope.

We need to understand what the word **“person”** means when talking about the **Spirit**. I want to bring this down to a human level first, in order to clarify an important principle. We all have a visible physical body and an invisible spirit, which is our mind, intellect and personality, in other words everything about us that is not physical. When someone says cruel and unjust things about us, are they inflicting physical pain on any part of our body? The answer, of course, is NO, but we suffer deep emotional pain. Where does this suffering take place? Deep down in our spirit. **“For what man knoweth the things of a man, save the spirit of man which is in him?”** (1 Cor 2:11)

Don't miss this important principle. Our spirit is as much our person as our physical body is our person. Our spirit is not another human being. It is our mind. Christ's Spirit in us has to do with our mind; what our mind processes is then reflected in what we think, say, and do. **“The Spirit itself beareth witness with our spirit, that we are the children of God.”** (Rom 8:16) Our physical and mental powers are to be used to God's glory: **“We are to glorify God in our body and in our spirit, which are His.”** (CG 399.2) This understanding will make our study easier to understand. So, just who is the Holy Spirit, referred to as the **“third person of the Godhead”**?

We need God's **GPS** to help us get to our destination. I want to stop here for a minute or two and talk about GPS. Many of us now use GPS (Global Positioning Satellites) to drive from point A to point B. The instrument always shows us where we are in route to our destination, how many miles to go and what time we will arrive. It always tells us when we need to make any turns and lets us know when we have arrived. God's GPS will always help us understand what we need to know on a given subject with multiple quotations.

God's **GPS** will help us clearly understand who the third person of the Godhead is. The following are many **GPS** statements to help us in our search [for the truth](#).

God's Prophet Says, "Christ tells us that the Holy Spirit is the Comforter, and the Comforter is the Holy Ghost, 'the Spirit of truth, which the Father shall send in My name.' ...This refers to the omnipresence of the Spirit of Christ, called the Comforter." (14MR 179)

That explicit, definitive statement, by itself, speaks volumes. Ellen White was inspired to write that the Comforter, who is the Holy Ghost, and the Spirit of truth, is the omnipresence of the Spirit of whom? Christ. He couldn't be everywhere physically with His growing church, but His invisible Spirit is *in* every believer, meaning in our minds/hearts. He will dwell where He is welcomed. Is a person's spirit—his mind or personality—part of him, or separate from him? We know the common sense answer to that, because we just discussed it. Now let us read a similar statement from Ellen White's pen with more context around it:

God's Prophet Says, "The Spirit was given as a regenerating agency, and without this the sacrifice of Christ would have been of no avail. The power of evil had been strengthening for centuries, and the submission of man to this satanic captivity was amazing. Sin could be resisted and overcome only through the mighty agency of the third person of the Godhead, who would come with no modified energy, but in the fullness of divine power. It is the Spirit that makes effectual what has been wrought out by the world's Redeemer. It is by the Spirit that the heart is made pure. Through the Spirit the believer becomes a partaker of the divine nature. Christ has given his Spirit as a divine power to overcome all hereditary and cultivated tendencies to evil, and to impress his own character upon the church." (RH May 19, 1904)

Please note - Christ's Spirit is a divine power. It is "His own character" (His own mind, His own life), not a different person from Him. In that quotation were several references to the same Spirit; Ellen White called it "the" Spirit as well as "his" Spirit. The principle of letting her writings interpret themselves tells us that "the" Spirit, without the possessive pronoun, nonetheless is the same as "His" Spirit. And the possessive indicates ownership, not independence from Christ.

God's Prophet Says, "Our condition through sin has become preternatural [outside the ordinary course of nature], and the power that restores us must be supernatural, else it has no value. There is but one power that can break the hold of evil from the hearts of men, and that is the power of God in Jesus Christ." (8T 291)

And how does that power of God in Christ break the hold of evil in us?

“There must be a power working from within, a new life from above, before men can be changed from sin to holiness. That power is Christ. His grace alone can quicken the lifeless faculties of the soul, and attract it to God, to holiness.”
(SC 18)

The indwelling Spirit of Christ is the *only* power that can break the hold of evil from our hearts!

God’s Prophet Says, “*The divine Spirit that the world’s Redeemer promised to send is the presence and power of God.*” (ST November 23, 1891)

Now, come—let us reason together. If the **“power of God”** is **“in Christ Jesus,”** as quoted from Ellen White previously, and if the **“divine Spirit”** is **“the presence and power of God,”** as the quote just stated, and if that’s the **“only power”** that can break the hold of evil from us, then we can praise God for His revelation that the **“divine Spirit,”** the **“presence and power of God,”** is none other than the **“indwelling Spirit of Christ.”**

Ellen White’s inspired pen said explicitly: **“That power is Christ.”** Once the scales fall from our eyes, it seems so obvious and easy to understand. What wonderful light God has given us about the third person of the Godhead. Christ omnipresent is the Comforter, the Holy Spirit.

When Jesus was with the disciples in His physical presence, He was a great source of comfort. But when He was about to leave them, they were fearing His absence, so He made a promise found in John 14:18: **“I will not leave you comfortless: I will come to you.”**

When Jesus said, **“I will not leave you comfortless: I will come to you.”** Jesus was not going to send another person who never was human and never had the experience mankind experienced. While He was assuming His new tasks in the heavenly sanctuary, it was by His Spirit in the omnipresence, called the third Person of the Godhead, that He could continue to comfort His disciples. We are comforted by the same Spirit of Christ today and soon, we will be united with Him in His physical presence. Now let us get confirmation.

God’s Prophet Says, “Christ declared that after his ascension, he would send to his church, as his crowning gift, the Comforter, who was to take his place. This Comforter is the Holy Spirit,—the soul of his life, the efficacy of his church, the light and life of the world. With his Spirit Christ sends a reconciling influence and a power that takes away sin.” (RH May 19, 1904)

This quotation makes it plain that the Comforter that Christ promised to send “**is the Holy Spirit,**” which is “**his Spirit,**” meaning Christ’s Spirit, with all the power and blessings needed for our deliverance.

In further confirmation, Ellen White wrote, first quoting Jesus’ words to His disciples, “***I will pray the Father, and he shall send you another Comforter, that he may abide with you forever, even the Spirit of truth, whom the world cannot receive, because it seeth him not, neither knoweth him; but ye know him, for he dwelleth with you, and shall be in you.***’ (John 14:16, 17.) ***This refers to the omnipresence of the Spirit of Christ, called the Comforter....***” (Letter 7, 1891)

Let us examine some additional GPS quotations:

“The only defense against evil is the indwelling of Christ in the heart through faith in His righteousness.” (DA 324)

“Not until the life of Christ becomes a vitalizing power in our lives can we resist the temptations that assail us from within and from without.” (MH 130)

“The Holy Spirit, which proceeds from the only begotten Son of God, binds the human agent, body, soul, and spirit, to the perfect, divine-human nature of Christ.” (RH April 5, 1906)

“God hath sent forth the Spirit of his Son into your hearts, crying, Abba, Father.” (Gal 4:6) ***That fact—“Christ in us”—gives us “union with the divine.”*** (RH Jan. 5, 1911)

So that we may know the incomprehensible value of the Spirit of the Son of God, given to believers to dwell in us, transforming us and fitting us for service to God, we have these words from Inspiration:

“Heavenly intelligences are waiting to co-operate with human instrumentalities, that the world may see what human beings may become through a union with the divine. Those who consecrate body, soul and spirit to God’s service will constantly receive a new endowment of physical, mental, and spiritual power. The inexhaustible supplies of heaven are at their command. Christ gives them the life of his life. The Holy Spirit puts forth its highest energies to work in mind and heart. Through the grace given us, we may achieve victories which, because of our defects of character and the smallness of our faith, may have seemed to us impossible. To every one who offers himself to the Lord for service, withholding nothing, is given power for the attainment of measureless results.” (RH Jan. 5, 1911)

Our one true eternal Father God, at a point in eternity when He begat Jesus, put into His Son all of His divine attributes including omniscience, omnipotence and His external omnipresent Holy Spirit, which they both share. It is only by that singular Holy Spirit, that they both are able to make their abode in us.

And so this singular, omnipresent Holy Spirit, which is the external Spirit of Christ, everywhere present, is as much His Person, as is His physical presence in the heavenly sanctuary, and is therefore the “Third Person of the Godhead.”

I will close this study with a scripture which confirms the fact that there is but one Spirit, and it is not a third being. Ephesians 4:4-6 **“There is one body, and one Spirit, even as ye are called in one hope of your calling; One Lord, one faith, one baptism, One God and Father of all, who is above all, and through all, and in you all.”**

AMEN.

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