

Holy Spirit - Nature and Role (Part 1)

Key Verse

Joel 2:28-29 - And it shall come to pass afterward, that I will pour out my Spirit on all flesh; your sons and your daughters shall prophesy, your old men shall dream dreams, and your young men shall see visions. Even on the male and female servants in those days I will pour out my Spirit.

Exploring the Bible

I. His Nature

A. He Has all the Power

Read *Genesis 1:1 – 31*

Question: What was the spirit of God doing (verse 2)?

Answer:

The spirit of God is present at creation. It is God's spirit who is hovering or brooding over the formless and empty planet we know as earth. The picture is that of a bird as she hovers over her brood of young. Through the awesome power of the Holy Spirit, the creative word of God is enacted. Light is formed, waters are separated, plants and animals are created, the sun and moon and stars are formed, and finally, mankind himself is created.

B. He is Everywhere

Read *Psalms 139:7 – 12*

Question: Is there any place that you can hide from God?

Answer:

God's spirit fills the physical universe. There is no place to hide from the Holy Spirit no matter where you go. He is always present everywhere at all times.

II. His Roles on this Earth

A. His Role with Man

Genesis 2:7 - ...then the Lord God formed the man of dust from the ground and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life, and the man became a living creature.

Question: What does God breathe into man?

Answer:

We have already seen the role of the Holy Spirit in creation as it demonstrates His unlimited power. Now He is directly involved in man's creation. Out of all the creatures that God creates, only man receives the breath or spirit life. No other creature received this, yet all of them were alive. What God breathed into man made him a unique being amongst all God's creation. In that breath, man received the very life of God, the spirit of God.

Genesis 6:3 - Then the Lord said, "My Spirit shall not abide in man forever, for he is flesh: his days shall be 120 years."

Question: What would God's spirit not do forever?

Answer:

After Adam and Eve willingly disobeyed God's instructions in the garden, the Holy Spirit goes from being a resident in man to contending with or striving with man. Man is now an adversary of God's, and the Holy Spirit's role becomes one of contending with man's heart rather than residing in man's heart.

John 20:21 – 22 - Jesus said to them again, "Peace be with you. As the Father has sent me, even so I am sending you." And when he had said this, he breathed on them and said to them, "Receive the Holy Spirit."

Question: What does Jesus do on the disciples (verse 22)?

Answer:

Jesus has risen from the dead; his work is finished. As he meets with the disciples, the picture from Genesis now comes full circle. Jesus, the creator of the universe, once again breathes on the disciples so they can receive the Holy Spirit. This time the Holy Spirit would not be forced to leave because of man's sin and rebellion. All sin had been paid for on the cross.

B. The Holy Spirit Poured Out

Read *Joel 2:28 – 32*

Question: Who will be poured out on all people (verse 28)?

Answer:

Question: What will be the result of this outpouring (verse 28)?

Answer:

Question: Who will receive this outpouring (verse 29)?

This prophecy was given several hundred years before Jesus came to this earth. It is describing a time when everyone who desired it would be able to experience the Holy Spirit, not just a select few.

Read *Acts 2:1 – 21*

Question: When does this outpouring take place (verse 17)?

Answer:

Question: What happened when people were filled with the Holy Spirit?

Answer:

Question: Who prophesied this event?

Answer:

When the people in the upper room poured out into the streets speaking in other languages and causing an uproar, Peter said that this is what the prophet Joel meant when he prophesied about the outpouring of the Holy Spirit. It says in verse 17 that this happens in "the last days." This was 2000 years ago. The outpouring of the Holy Spirit ushered in "the last days." Unlike in the "former days" when only a select few could experience the prophetic and the working of the Holy Spirit through them, now anyone young or old, man or woman, can receive and experience the outpouring of the Holy Spirit.

Practical Exercise:

Since the Holy Spirit has been poured out on us let's continue to pray for those who have specific needs. Let's let the Holy Spirit work through us to minister to those around us.