

It's my intent, for the next several weeks, to examine the broad theme of the Person and Work of the Holy Spirit. This morning we will consider His Person, and then beginning next week His work. First, in creation and then secondly in the new creation (redemption), both upon the Head (Christ), and body (church).

Thus, we are forced to spend this first hour laying a theological foundation, upon which I hope to consider some more practical topics such as spiritual gifts, walking by the Spirit, being filled by the Spirit, and fellowshiping with the Spirit.

But before we come to the work of the Spirit we must first begin with the Person of the Spirit. It's rather easy, and in fact common, to skip this and go straight to His ministry among and within the church. But this would be a serious error, as the Spirit's Person must never be overshadowed by His work. George Smeaton—"Attention must not be absorbed with the work of the Spirit so as to forget the Spirit Himself."

Before we come to this morning's subject, The Personality of the Spirit, I want to first suggest three introductory exhortations with regards to any study of the Holy Spirit:

(1) Let us remember that the Spirit Himself is worthy of consideration and worship. It's been a complaint of some that Reformed Christians fail to give the Spirit His proper place. Personally, I think this claim is largely without merit. Few people have written more about the Person and work of the Holy Spirit than John Calvin and our Puritan forefathers. But let us brethren, be sure that we ourselves do not neglect the third Person of the Trinity (for as we shall see, as a Divine Person He is worthy of our heart's praise and adoration).

(2) Let us remember that the primary work of the Spirit is to glorify Christ not Himself. Thus, any study of the Spirit of necessity has to make much of Christ. The Spirit comes to shed light upon the Person and work of Christ and not Himself.

(3) Let us remember that the Spirit always works in and through the word of God. This is how the Spirit makes Christ known—through His word. Thus, as we begin our short study of the Person and work of the Spirit, let us keep these three things in mind.

Galatians 4:1-7, is Paul's conclusion to a previous train of thought, that constitutes one of his great summaries of the gospel message. In the fullness of time, in fulfilling His promise, the Father sent forth His Son, born of a woman, born under the obligations of the law, to redeem or rescue those who were by nature, condemned by that law, in order that, we might receive the adoption as sons.

Verse 6—"And because you are sons, God has sent forth the Spirit of His Son into your hearts, crying out, 'Abba, Father!'" Now, although our sermon this morning (and the ones to follow) will be topical, I want to largely root everything I want to say this morning in a single text of Scripture. There are three things I want to show you this morning and they are all found (to some degree) in Galatians 4:6—The Spirit is a Person, a Divine Person, and a Distinct Person.

- I. The Spirit is a Person
- II. The Spirit is a Divine Person
- III. The Spirit is a Distinct Divine Person

#### I. The Spirit is a Person

- 1. By this is meant, the Holy Spirit is not merely a force or power, but He has personable attributes and consciousness.
- 2. To be fair the term "person" can be misleading—most people wrongly assume this entails "human" attributes.

3. But it simply affirms that the Holy Spirit has Being and personality, just as the Father and Son have Being and personality.
4. C.R. Vaughan—"A person is different from a mere thing, not only in the possession of reason, moral quality, and a will colored by these attributes, but as possessed of a consciousness of these powers."
5. John MacArthur—"The Holy Spirit is a Person. He is not a mystical force or metaphysical influence. He is a divine person—the third Person of the Trinity—and acknowledging that fact is absolutely essential to an orthodox understanding of who He is."
6. It's for this reason, God the Father sends forth the Spirit of His Son into our hearts—"crying out, 'Abba, Father!'"
7. Paul elsewhere said in Romans 8:15—"you received the Spirit of adoption by whom we cry out, 'Abba, Father.'"
8. Thus, according to Gal.4:6, it's by the personal ministry of the Spirit, Christians have a sense of their adoption, and cry out, Abba Father.
9. While it's Christians who say, "Abba, Father" while in prayer, they say this because of the Spirit's personal work.
10. Thus, we learn that the Holy Spirit is a Personal Being who lives within our hearts and helps us know God's love.
11. Rom.8:16—"The Spirit Himself bears witness with our spirit that we are children of God"—"the Spirit Himself."
12. (1) Personal pronouns—by this I mean, the Holy Scriptures describe the Holy Spirit as a "he" and not an "it."
13. Jn.16:7-8—"Nevertheless I tell you the truth. It is to your advantage that I go away; for if I do not go away, the Helper will not come to you; but if I depart, I will send Him to you. And when He has come, He will convict the world of sin, and of righteousness, and of judgment."
14. (2) Personal activities—the Spirit indwells, teaches, testifies, convicts, guides, hears, speaks, shows, glorifies, sends, forbids, intercedes, sanctifies, reveals, searches, and knows.
15. All of these activities necessitate a personal Being—He, the Holy Spirit, personally indwells, teaches, and convicts.
16. Acts 13:2—"The Holy Spirit said, 'Now, separate to Me Barnabas and Saul for the work to which I Have called them.'"
17. Here we find the Holy Spirit speaking, calling, and commanding—furthermore, He refers to Himself as "Me" and "I."
18. (3) Personal characteristics—the Spirit has intelligence, a will, affections, He is lied to, tempted, resisted, grieved, outraged, blasphemed, and called upon.
19. R.A. Torrey—"The Holy Spirit is not a blind, impersonal influence or power that comes into our lives to illuminate, sanctify, and empower them. No, He is immeasurably more than that. He is a holy person who comes to dwell in our hearts, one who knows fully every act we perform, every word we speak, every thought we entertain, even the most fleeting fancy that is allowed to pass through our minds."
20. Furthermore, the fact that Christians have fellowship with the Spirit, argues the fact that He's more than a mere force or power.
21. 2Cor.13:14—"The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, and the love of God, and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit be with you all. Amen."
22. Before we move to our next point, let me briefly address a common objection to the personality of the Holy Spirit.
23. Some have objected that the Spirit is a Person, because at times the Scriptures speak of Him in ways that are contrary to a Person.
24. For example, Joel foretold the gift of the Holy Spirit in terms of "pouring out"—"I will pour out My Spirit on all flesh" (2:28).
25. How can you pour out a Person? You can pour out a power or influence, but how can God pour out a divine Person?
26. Well, obviously brethren, the Scriptures describe the Spirit as being "poured out" to describe His personal ministry.

27. The work of the Spirit is like water. He refreshes the dry and thirsty soul with grace. He satisfies the soul with Christ.
28. Jn.7:38-39—"He who believes in Me, as the Scripture has said, out of his heart will flow rivers of living water. But this He spoke concerning the Spirit, whom those believing in Him would receive."
29. And the Scriptures at times speak of the Spirit in ways that describe His influence within the hearts of God's people.
30. Thus, the Scriptures describe His work with various imageries—it's like oil, fire, water, and wind—these describe His influence upon and within us.
31. But the Holy Spirit is not oil, fire, water, or wind—He is a personal Being, whose ministry resembles that of oil, fire, water, and wind.
32. Joe Morecraft—"The Holy Spirit is not an impersonal force, an atmosphere, or a warm feeling that fills a church. He is a living, thinking, loving Person who has a will and a moral character, and who fellowships with people."

## II. The Spirit is a Divine Person

1. Here I mean to underscore the fact, that the Holy Spirit is fully or truly divine, just as much as the Father and Son.
2. The fact that the Holy Spirit is sent by Christ to as His Vicar on earth, necessarily argues that He is no less Divine than Christ.
3. (1) Divine names—the Holy Spirit is expressly called God, the Spirit of God, the eternal Spirit, LORD, and Jehovah.
4. For example, Peter said of Ananias in Acts 5:3-4—"Ananias, why has Satan filled your heart to lie to the Holy Spirit... You have not lied to men but to God."
5. (2) Divine activities—the Spirit creates, inspires Scripture, convicts of sin, regenerates, sanctifies, resurrects, comforts, indwells, leads, gives gifts, and anoints.
6. Brethren, who can do these works but God Himself—only God can create the world out of nothing and raise a dead sinner from the spiritual grave (and these are works that are expressly accredited to the Holy Spirit).
7. (3) Divine attributes—the Holy Spirit is holy, good, all powerful, all knowing, all present, all wise, and eternal.
8. Ps.139:7-8—"Where can I go from Your Spirit? Or where can I flee from Your presence? If I ascend into heaven, You are there; if I make my bed in hell, behold, You are there."
9. Notice, the Holy Spirit is equated with His presence and God Himself—wherever His Spirit is, God is also there (because they one and the same).
10. No created being is everywhere present—even the angels themselves, though spirit beings, are spatially limited.
11. But this is not true for God—only God is everywhere present—He is boundless—He is limitless—He is omnipresent.
12. (4) Divine treatment—the Holy Spirit is loved, trusted, prayed to, worshiped, honored, obeyed, feared, and glorified.
13. Larger Catechism (Q.11)—"How does it appear that the Son and the Holy Spirit are God equal with the Father? A. The Scriptures manifest that the Son and the Holy Spirit are God equal with the Father, ascribing unto them such names, attributes, works, and worship, as are proper to God only."
14. John Dick—"To sum up the arguments advanced in support of the divinity of the Holy Ghose: if he is designated by names peculiar to God, if divine perfections are ascribed to him, if he has performed such works as manifestly surpass created power, and if religious worship is addressed to him, we are warranted to affirm that he is not a created spirit, but God over all, blessed forever."
15. Albert Martin—"The Spirit is a divine person. He is God in the fullest sense. All that constitutes the essence of the Father's deity and the Son's deity can and must be equally attributed to the person of the Holy Spirit. Hence, all the reverence, all the submission, and all the love that flows out of Spirit-renewed hearts to the Father and the Son must also constantly flow out to this glorious divine person called the Holy Spirit."

## III. The Spirit is a Distinct Person

1. It's here that we come to the most difficult aspect of our study—while equal to the Father and Son, the Spirit is distinct from the Father and Son.
2. Now, brethren I understand that this is a rather lofty concept, but the important this is, is this the teaching of Scripture?
3. The Holy Scriptures teach us that God is one—there are not three gods—there's one God in three co-equal, yet distinct persons.
4. Thus, while each of the persons possess the entire essence of God, there are unique things true of each Person.
5. The Father begets the Son, the Son is begotten of the Father, and the Holy Spirit proceeds from the Father and Son.
6. These of course refer to how the three Persons relate to each other, within the single divine essence or Godhead.
7. These are eternal distinctions or relations—the Father always begat the Son, the Son was always begotten of the Father, and the Spirit eternally proceeds from the Father and Son.
8. Sometimes theologians distinguish between internal and external works of God—that is, that which is in God and outside of God.
9. By "internal works" are meant the internal relations that exist between the Father, Son, and Spirit from all eternity
10. By "external works" are meant His works of creation and redemption—these take place outside of God in time.
11. Thus, when we speak of the procession of the Spirit, we refer to the eternal and internal relation of the Spirit to the Father and Son.
12. Now, the term procession simply means "to come forth or proceed"—the Spirit comes forth or from the Father and Son.
13. It's for this reason, the Holy Spirit is at times described as the Spirit of God (the Father), and the Spirit of Christ.
14. The Scriptures everywhere describe the Spirit as the Spirit of God, which means He comes from God the Father.
15. And here in our text (Gal.4:6), Paul refers to the Spirit as "the Spirit of His Son" which means, He comes from God the Son.
16. Thus, the Holy Spirit proceeds or comes from the Father and Son—He is the Spirit of God and the Spirit of Christ.
17. The Nicene Creed—"I believe in the Holy Spirit, the Lord and giver of life, who proceeds from the Father and the Son; who with the Father and the Son, together is worshiped and glorified."
18. And so, while the three Persons are equally God and deserve divine treatment, they must be distinguished from each other.
19. The Father is not the Son, the Son is not the Father, and the Spirit is neither the Father or Son, and yet, there's one God not three.
20. This is actually a very beautiful truth—from all eternity the three Persons of Trinity uniquely related to each other.
21. The Father, Son, and Spirit loved each other and held perfect fellowship together, all within the single divine essence.
22. Furthermore, this is why the Holy Spirit is distinctly referred to as "the Spirit"—our Savior said in John 3:24—"God is Spirit."
23. That is God is Spirit or spiritual, in that He has no body or physical aspect to Him—in this sense each Person is Spirit (Father, Son, and Spirit).
24. But why does Scripture refer to the third Person as "the Spirit"—well, I suggest it's for the same reason the first Person is the Father, and the second Person is the Son.
25. The Father is the Father because He begets, and the Son is the Son because He is begotten, and the Spirit is the Spirit because He proceeds.
26. Now, it's at this point that I must remind you that the Hebrew and Greek words for Spirit literally mean "breath or wind."

27. The Personal names (Father, Son, and Spirit) reflect the unique way in which each Person relates to the other two.
28. Accordingly, Scripture refers to the Spirit as "the breath of the Almighty" (Job 33:4), "the breath of His mouth" (Ps.33:6), and "the breath of His lips" (Isa.11:4).
29. The Spirit is likened to the breath of the Father and Son, and the reason being, He proceeds from the Father and Son.
30. He is the Spirit of the Father and He is the Spirit of the Son. These three Persons are equal and yet they are distinct.
31. Now, admittedly what we've learned thus far is a bit academic, but, as I hope now to show you, it's very practical.
32. And thus, in light of the fact that the Spirit is a divine and distinct Person, I want to close our time with three exhortations.
33. Exhortation 1—Let us honor the Holy Spirit—if the Holy Spirit is a divine Person then we must properly honor Him.
34. Let me briefly suggest a few common ways we dishonor the Holy Spirit—we ignore Him, grieve Him, or distort Him.
35. (1) We ignore Him—this perhaps is the most subtle and common way many Christians dishonor the Holy Spirit.
36. It's a very terrible thing to invite someone into your home only to ignore them—to act as if they were not present.
37. This is nowhere truer than in regards to the Holy Spirit, who personally and permanently resides within our hearts.
38. Brethren, surely, I trust we realize, that God Himself, in the Person of the Holy Spirit, uniquely dwells in our hearts.
39. And to live our days, from beginning to end without ever thinking about this or being mindful of, dishonors Him.
40. Now, we know that as God the Holy Spirit is everywhere present—there is no place where we can hide from Him.
41. And yet, we also know that the Holy Spirit is uniquely present in the gathered church and in our individual hearts.
42. 1Cor.6:19—"Or do you not know that your body is the temple of the Holy Spirit who is in you, whom you have from God."
43. (2) We grieve Him, Eph.4:30—"Do not grieve the Holy Spirit of God, by whom you were sealed for the day of redemption."
44. The most obvious way we grieve the Spirit is by acting in ways that frustrate or hinder His work in our hearts.
45. The Holy Spirit is the Spirit of holiness, and thus, when we think, speak, and act unholy, this grieves the Spirit.
46. (3) We distort Him—by this I mean, we distort the Scriptures teaching about Him—we misunderstand His Person and work.
47. This of course is a rather common way in which the Holy Spirit is dishonored in our day—He's misrepresented.
48. Now, it's not my purpose at this point, brethren, to describe all of the many ways the Spirit is distorted in our day.
49. But, let me simply say, the tragedy is, oftentimes, those who speak most about the Spirit, actually know the least about the Spirit.
50. In fact, let me simply suggest one common way the ministry of the Spirit is distorted—we fail to realize the Spirit's primary task is to make Christ known.
51. The purpose of the Holy Spirit isn't to make Himself known, but to shine the limelight upon the Person of Christ.
52. Jn.16:14—"He will glorify Me, for He will take of what is Mine and declare it to you"—that is, He will glorify Me through My word.

53. J.I. Packer—"It's as if the Spirit stands behind us casting light on Jesus who stands before us. The Spirit's message to us is never look at Me, listen to Me, come to Me, get to know Me, but always, look at Him, see Him, get to know Him, and enjoy life and peace."
54. Furthermore, another way we can distort the ministry of the Holy Spirit, is to detach Him from the Holy Scriptures.
55. The Holy Spirit always works in and through the word, and to separate Him from the word, is to distort His ministry.
56. Exhortation 2—Let us rely upon the Holy Spirit—if the Holy Spirit is a divine Person then let us trust in Him.
57. Now, admittedly, the Scriptures do not speak as often about trusting the Holy Spirit, as they do about trusting the Father and Son.
58. But, the Scriptures do rather frequently speak about "living by the Holy Spirit" and "walking by the Holy Spirit."
59. And what do these phrases mean but at least—we are to live or walk relying upon the power of the Holy Spirit.
60. If the Spirit is a divine person, and thus possesses the power and wisdom of God, let us rely upon that power and wisdom.
61. Let me remind you, that each person of the Trinity has a specific work to perform—the Father plans, the Son purchases, and the Spirit applies.
62. Thus, the Father works through the Son and by the Spirit—the Holy Spirit is applier of salvation to our hearts.
63. Everything is accomplished by the Spirit—He enables us to understand Scripture, pray, mortify sin, and obey the law.
64. Every good need that any Christian has every performed, was accomplished by the powerful work of the Spirit.
65. Gal.5:25—"If we live by the Spirit, let us also walk by the Spirit"—that is, if the Spirit has raised us from the dead, then walk (live) dependent upon the Spirit.
66. Rom.8:13—"For if you live according to the flesh you will die; but if by the Spirit you put to death the deeds of the body, you will live."
67. Zech.4:6—"Not by might nor by power, but by My Spirit, says the LORD of hosts"—salvation is not accomplished by our own might or power but by the Holy Spirit.
68. Furthermore, Paul describes love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, and self-control, all as fruit of the Spirit.
69. And in Eph.6:17, he describes the word of God as "the sword of the Spirit" as only the Spirit can effectually apply Scripture.
70. Brethren, in short, every single thing we do is dependent upon the Holy Spirit—every thought, word, and deed.
71. We must practically every day confess with the Nicene Creed—"I believe in the Holy Spirit, the Lord and giver of life."
72. Exhortation 3—Let us love and cherish the Holy Spirit—if the Spirit is a divine Person then He deserves to be loved and adored.
73. Matt.22:37—"Jesus said to him, 'You shall love the LORD your God with all your heart, with all your soul, and with all your mind.'"
74. That is, we are to love the Triune God with all our heart, soul, and mind—we are to love the Father, Son, and Spirit.
75. And so, as we begin our study of the Person and work of the Holy Spirit, may God be pleased to give us a greater understanding and appreciation for this divine and distinct member of the Trinity!