

THE DEITY OF THE HOLY SPIRIT

More than a billion people in the world today believe there are many gods—several religions teach there are hundreds of gods. The Christian view is there is one God, but that this one God is triune in nature, and has revealed Himself to humanity as the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit. Understanding God is three-yet-one is foundational to the Christian faith and synthesized in the Trinity Doctrine.¹ This brief document profiles why Christians believe in the deity of the Holy Spirit, meaning, the Holy Spirit is distinct in personality from God but equal in essence to God. Five reasons Christians equate the Holy Spirit with God follow.

The Holy Spirit is called God. Acts 5:3-4 profiles an event in the early church and, in the midst of noting a particular sin a man was guilty of, the Apostle Peter states:

*“...Ananias, why hath Satan filled thine heart to **lie to the Holy Ghost**, and to keep back part of the price of the land? Whiles it remained, was it not thine own? and after it was sold, was it not in thine own power? why hast thou conceived this thing in thine heart? thou hast not **lied unto men, but unto God**.”²*

Note that in verse 3, the inspired Word indicates that Ananias “*lied to the **Holy Ghost**.*” In verse 4, the inspired Word indicates that by the same action, Ananias “*lied...unto **God**.*” By applying transitive property³ principle in interpreting this verse, we see:

- If Ananias lied to the Spirit (V.3) and...

¹ Ryrie, Charles C. *Basic Theology* (Wheaton, Illinois: Victor Books, 1995), 51-59.

² Unless otherwise noted, all biblical passages referenced are in the King James Version.

³ Transitive Principle: If A = B and B = C, then A = C

- If Ananias, by the same action, lied to God (V.4) then...
- According to the transitive principle of substitution, God and the Spirit are equal—the Holy Spirit is God.

The Holy Spirit is called Lord: 2 Corinthians 3:17 equates the *Spirit* with the *Lord*. The straight-forward verse makes that clear:

*“Now the **Lord is that Spirit:** and where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is liberty.”*

Not only does 2 Corinthians 3:17 link the Holy Spirit with the Father (“Lord”), it also links the Spirit with the Son. In 2 Corinthians 3:17, the agent which makes “liberty” possible is the *Spirit*. The word for *liberty*⁴ in the original Greek text is ἐλευθερία ([eleutheria](#)), which is the same root word used in John 8:32, 36 in reference to the *liberty* or freedom we receive through Christ⁵. Therefore, from this verse one can conclude there is a oneness between the Father, the Son, and the Spirit as **1)** The Lord (Father) is equal to the Spirit and **2)** what the Spirit provides (liberty/freedom) is the same as what Jesus provides.

The Holy Spirit is omnipotent, omniscient, and omnipresent. The Holy Spirit is deity because the unique attributes of God are assigned to the Holy Spirit. God and God alone is omnipotent, omniscient, and omnipresent. Therefore, when Scripture associates the Holy Spirit with the

⁴ Zodhiates, Spiros. *Hebrew Greek Key Study Bible* (Chattanooga, TN: AMG Publishers, 1990), 1413,1536

⁵ “Ye shall know the truth and the truth shall set you free. If the Son...shall make you free, ye shall be free indeed.”

power⁶ of God in Luke 1, the wisdom⁷ or knowledge of God in 1 Corinthians 2, and the omnipresence⁸ of God in Psalm 139, the Bible is affirming that the Spirit is God.

Creation is ascribed to the Holy Spirit (Gen 1:1-2). Not only does Scripture show the Holy Spirit to be one with God by sharing the characteristics of God, Scripture also shows the Spirit to be God because He shares in the unique work ascribed to God. For example, the Spirit shared in the work of creating⁹ the earth in Genesis 1, and in creating life¹⁰ in Job 33.

Prophecy comes by the Holy Spirit. 2 Peter 1:21 notes: *“For the prophecy came not in old time by the will of man: but holy men of God spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost.”*

Scripture notes that the inspired Word comes from God. Psalm 119 references this more than 50 times. 2 Peter 1:21, however, notes that Scripture is given by the Spirit¹¹. Using the Transitive property noted above, 2 Peter 1:21 equates the Holy Spirit with God. 2 Timothy 3:16 equates the Holy Spirit with God by combining¹² terms associated with God and Spirit (*theós*, "God"

and *pnéō*, "breath or breathe out") into a compound word, *theópneustos*, translated *inspiration of*

⁶ “And the angel answered and said unto her, The Holy Ghost shall come upon thee, and the power of the Highest shall overshadow thee” (Luke 1:35).

⁷ “God revealed them...by his Spirit: for the Spirit searcheth all things, yea, the deep things of God” (1 Cor. 2:10).

⁸ “Whither shall I go from thy spirit? or whither shall I flee from thy presence? If I ascend up into heaven, thou art there: if I make my bed in hell, behold, thou art there. If I take the wings of the morning, and dwell in the uttermost parts of the sea; Even there shall thy hand lead me, and thy right hand shall hold me” (Psalm 139:7-10).

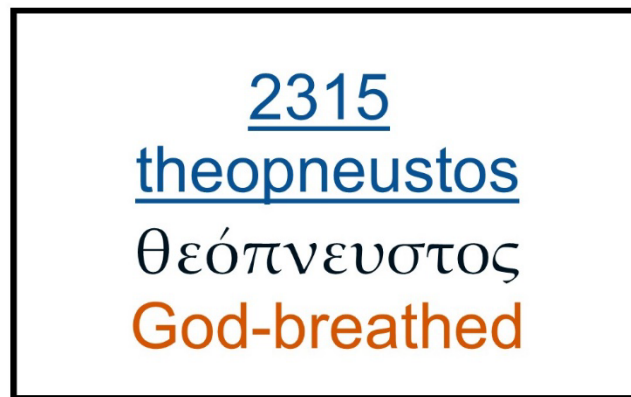
⁹ “In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth. And the earth was without form, and void; and darkness was upon the face of the deep. And the Spirit of God moved upon the face of the waters” (Gen. 1:1-2).

¹⁰ “The spirit of God hath made me, and the breath of the Almighty hath given me life” (Job 33:4).

¹¹ “For the prophecy came not in old time by the will of man: but holy men of God spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost” (2 Pet 1:21).

¹² All scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness” (2 Tim 3:16).

God in the KJV text and *God-breathed* in many other translations. A framed text box¹³ below shows the interpretation of the key word in 2 Timothy 3:16 from the original Greek text. As the word *pnéō* is linked to breath and the Spirit, it has become the root word for *pneumatology*, a school of study in Christian systematic theology, meaning, the study of the Spirit.



Many seek to minimize the nature of the Holy Spirit by teaching the Spirit is one in *purpose* with God. However, Scripture clearly teaches that the Spirit and God are one in *essence*. In Christianity, the three aspects of the Godhead—the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit, comprise an ontological Trinity. That is, the Son and Holy Spirit, though distinct personalities, are one with God and equal to God.

¹³ Bible Hub Interlinear, © 2004 - 2021 by Bible Hub and Helps Ministries, Inc., accessed October 12, 2021, https://biblehub.com/interlinear/2_timothy/3-16.htm