

How to Live Out Our Faith More Fully in Partnership with the Holy Spirit

Last Week: Bill Stevenson :) Church's Understanding of the Holy Spirit and a Show of Hands



This Week: Relationship with the Holy Spirit





The Trinity by Andrei Rublev

Where Do We Begin in Talking about the Invisible Divine?

The Trinity

Why?

Because our understanding of the Trinity = our understanding of God*

Specifically . . .
who God is,
what God is like,
how God works,
how God relates to us.*

*Because that is also true of the Holy Spirit



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Trinity Icon

An icon is considered to be a lens. If so, then what are the things we notice in this icon about the Trinity?

- Community/Unity
- Three persons
- Relational
- Mutuality
- Equality
- Turn toward one another, truly with each other
- Communicative
- "Defer, refer, prefer"
- There is space at the table for more

 their posture is invitational to
 us.



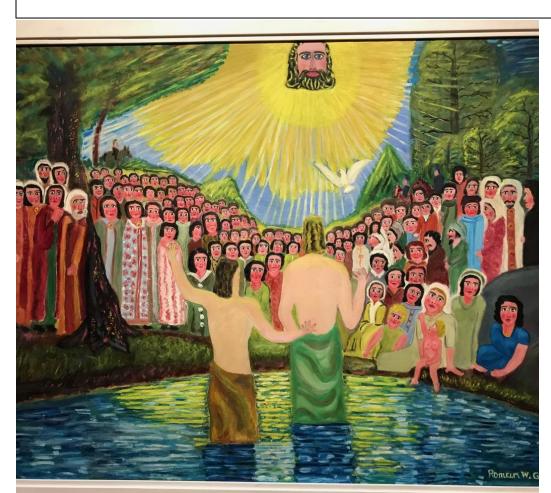
Describing the Trinity Has Always Had Its Challenges.

One God, yet Three Persons

Theologians of the early church explained the reality of the Trinity with the word "perichoresis" which is generally translated as "circle dance."

The Trinity is a dance among Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. It's not a top-down hierarchy. It's a relationship. And there is room for us in the dance.

Trinity: A Community Never Truly Separated







What Does God as a Community of Three Persons Mean to Us as God's People?

God is never alone . . . we are never alone.

God is relational and is interested in being in relationship with us.

There are three relationships for us . . . God the Parent, God the Child, God the Spirit.

One of my seminary professors challenged us to think about each relationship as a leg on a tripod. How balanced is our tripod?



What Can We Learn from the Word "Spirit"?

Hebrew: "Ru'ah" Greek: "Pneuma"

Both words mean wind, breath, and Spirit*

*All invisible and yet whose effects are visible and powerful.
There are, of course, many things that are invisible, but there is evidence of their reality.

Dove and fire imagery also capture the Holy Spirit.



What Do We Know About the Holy Spirit from the OT?

- Genesis
- Making of the Tabernacle
- Leading in the Wilderness
- Prophets
- Leaders
- Ezekiel
- God's People

The Holy Spirit is a creative power that can rest on human beings, gives life, gives gifts for God's purposes, gives comfort and guidance, and signals God's presence.



What Do We Know About the Holy Spirit from the NT?

- Birth of Jesus
- Baptism/Temptations of Jesus
- Ministry of Jesus/Mention by Jesus (Comforter, Advocate)
- Resurrection of Jesus
- Pentecost
- Paul's Writings
 Gift-Giving for the Church
 Fruit for Followers
 Peace that passes all understanding
 Prays for us with groans

The One who resurrected Jesus resides within us







The Way of the Spirit

"But what happens when we live God's way? God brings gifts into our lives, much the same way that fruit appears in an orchard—things like affection for others, exuberance about life, serenity. We develop a willingness to stick with things, a sense of compassion in the heart, and a conviction that a basic holiness permeates things and people. We find ourselves involved in loyal commitments, not needing to force our way in life, able to marshal and direct our energies wisely."

- Galatians 5:22-23 [The Message]

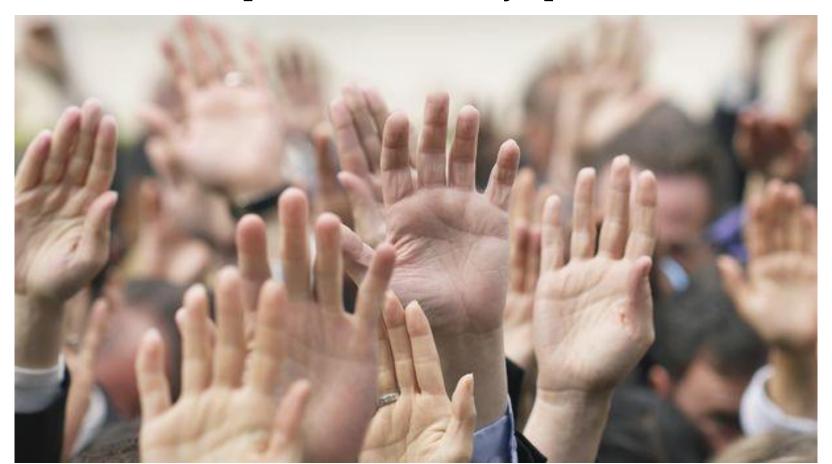


What Makes Us Think We Can Experience the Holy Spirit?

The Holy Spirit fulfills an ongoing but invisible role of connection and communication between people and God.

Like the Father and the Son, the Spirit is fueled by love and God's desire to keep us in the Divine Dance.

Getting Back to that Show of Hands . . . how have you experienced the Holy Spirit?





What Are The Ways We Have Personally Experienced the Holy Spirit?

Conversion (Charles Wesley, C. S. Lewis, James Martin)

Creativity (Handel's Messiah)

Transformation and Sanctification

Consolation

A Holy Spirit Experience

When I was beginning to write this book and had been talking to God about the enormity of the task, I went for a walk with my dog. I had only gone about 100 yards before my attention was drawn to a magnolia tree, covered in buds ready for their spring shining. One bud was open, revealing deep, pink and purple petals; the rest were closed, waiting. And it was as if God was saying to me, "the book you're writing is like this tree: each bug will open when the time is right. You begin with one chapter and the rest will follow. Trust the other chapters will bloom in their turn, you only have to make a start. "I felt immediately reassured and comforted; the memory of that moment has continued to sustain me when I have felt a bit bogged down or discouraged. I was grateful to God for a prayer answered through creation in such a clear and appropriate way. ~ Sue Pickering, Spiritual Direction: A Practical Introduction

A Holy Spirit Experience

Several years ago, my wife was very ill, as she underwent a long period of chemotherapy . . .

Through the generosity of a family friend, my wife and I were able to stay in their beach [house] . . . during the last few days of each treatment cycle. During one of these restorative times I increasingly became aware of how fearful I was of death, in a very real way potentially my wife's, and in a more abstract manner, my own mortality. Thoughts of death, increasingly intruded, and I began to realize that a fear of death had dogged my steps for a very long time. One morning, while my wife rested, I walked through a woodland area . . . [and] paused to watch the pirouetting flight of a monarch butterfly, with the sun reflecting on its wings in the early morning stillness. As I continued to watch, this monarch was joined by another and then another until everywhere I looked there were monarchs twisting, and turning. As I continued to watch this beautiful and unusual scene, I became aware of an inner thought or voice saying, "This is all death is, the transformation from one state to another, from the crawling caterpillar to the graceful dance of the butterfly. It is just like passing through the thinnest of veils to another, more beautiful reality." It was as if God had provided a unique and startling metaphor from nature to answer my own personal fears. I immediately felt a tremendous sense of peace as my anxiety and fear fell off me. From that moment on, the death of those closest to me and my own death has not disturbed me. I think that is a consequence, I have lived more boldly, more assuredly and far less fearfully in every area of my life. [Quoted in Pickering, pp. 58-59]



What Are the Ways We Can Experience the Holy Spirit?

Scripture Creation: "God's other book" **Inner promptings** The still small voice Dreams and visions Books, other people Hymns and song lyrics Directly through the senses The creative arts Prayer **Sacraments** Silence

[Adele Calhoun, Spiritual Disciplines Handbook]

What Are the Ways We Can Open Ourselves More to Partner with the Holy Spirit?

Spiritual Disciplines/Practices create opportunities and build awareness to encounter the Holy Spirit.

- Listening Prayer and Other Prayer
- Contemplation/Meditation/ Mindfulness ~ the art of noticing
- Mindfulness ~ the art of noticingLectio Divina
- Fasting
- Sabbath
- Forgiveness
- Journaling
- Silence and Solitude





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The Way of the Spirit

We worship a God of Spirit, but a God who communicates in ways universal and unique to each one of us.

We are called to walk in the ways of God and to walk with God and God is there to be enjoyed if we continue to keep our radar up and our hearts open.