



Is the Holy Spirit a Person?

"The Holy Spirit is a person, for He beareth witness with our spirits that we are the children of God. When this witness is borne, it carries with it its own evidence. At such times we believe and are sure that we are the children of God... The Holy Spirit has a personality, else He could not bear witness to our spirits and with our spirits that we are the children of God. He must also be a divine person, else He could not search out the secrets which lie hidden in the mind of God. 'For what man knoweth the things of a man, save the spirit of man which is in him? even so the things of God knoweth no man, but the Spirit of God'." - Manuscript 20, 1906; Evangelism p. 616, 617

The quoted verse towards the end in the above statement is from 1 Corinthians 2:11. It is the key to understanding the statement in it's fullness. According to Paul, man and his spirit is comparable to God and His Spirit. Just as man's spirit is not a different person to man, even so God's Holy Spirit is not a different person to God. Just as man's spirit is his very own person, even so God's Spirit is His very own person.

When we use the Testimonies as the key, we will discover some very important basic principles.

"The greatness of God is to us incomprehensible. "The Lord's throne is in heaven" (Psalm 11:4); yet by His Spirit He is everywhere present. He has an intimate knowledge of, and a personal interest in, all the works of His hand." - Education, p. 132

"In giving us His Spirit, God gives us Himself, making Himself a fountain of divine influences, to give health and life to the world." - Testimonies Volume 7, p. 273

If we keep the above principles in mind, things will be much easier to understand. The Spirit has a personality because God has a personality. In giving us His Spirit, God is giving us Himself, not someone else. When God gives us Himself (in Spirit) it is not devoid of personality. It is not just some impersonal force or essence. No, it is very personal and intimate. It is God's own person, having God's very own personality. The same goes for the fact that the Spirit is a divine person. This is because God is a divine person. You see, God is a spirit, and yet a person.

"It is the spirit that quickeneth; the flesh profiteth nothing; the words that I speak unto you, they are spirit, and they are life." Christ is not here referring to his doctrine, but to his person, the divinity of his character." - Review and Herald, April 5, 1906 par. 12

As Christ has inherited His Father's nature and attributes, He also possesses the same omnipresent Spirit, which is able to indwell His children. When on earth, His fleshly body was limited to be in one place.

"Cumbered with humanity, Christ could not be in every place personally; therefore it was altogether for their advantage that He should leave them, go to His Father, and send the Holy Spirit to be His successor on earth. The Holy Spirit is Himself divested of the personality of humanity and independent thereof. He would represent Himself as present in all places by His Holy Spirit, as the Omnipresent." - Manuscript Release 14, p. 23

We see over and over thru the Spirit of Prophecy and in scripture that the Spirit of Christ is the Holy Spirit. And Sister White used the language and illustration that the Holy Spirit was the third person of the Godhead. But, keep in mind that a first person and second person was never written by her.

(Those terms or nameplates would be leaked into usage by Prescott and Lacey) Nor is this in the scripture as this use of identity.

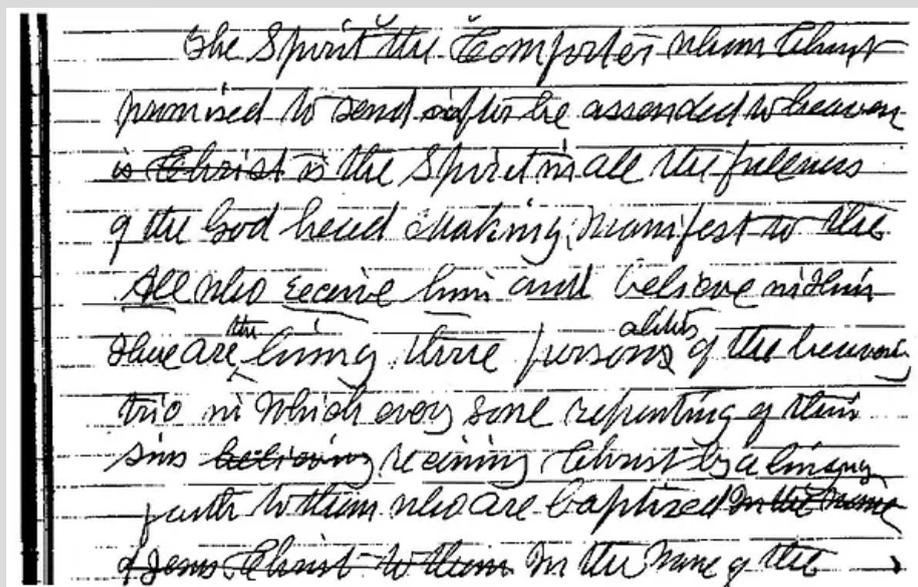
This third person is actually Christ coming to us in the Spirit. But that is not actually a separate person from Christ himself. But it is an illustration of a different personality. And since we know Christ when he was in a bodily form, as a human, as the Son of Man, we get stuck when he references that he would send "another comforter". Think about the usage of "third person language". That is what is going on here. it is a type of grammatical expression.

Jesus spoke often in third person language in the scriptures. Here is a common example:

"And then shall appear the sign of the Son of man in heaven: and then shall all the tribes of the earth mourn, and they shall see the Son of man coming in the clouds of heaven with power and great glory." Matthew 24:30

Jesus is the Son of Man, and yet he is talking about himself as "another person", a third person.

Sister White did in fact use the word personality in place of person in her writings. Below is an example of this. But her literary assistant Marian Davis, having sat thru a Trinitarian weighted presentation from a church elder (Herbert Camden Lacey) at the time, had an affect on her thinking. It was thru this that the word personality was changed to person as a type of grammatical correction by Sister Marian Davis.



This is an actual photocopy of Ellen White's handwritten manuscript (the top is cropped off missing the word "is") which begins with her version of William Boardman's description of the Holy Spirit.

**The Spirit is the Comforter whom Christ
Promised to send after he ascended to heaven
is the Spirit in all the fulness
of the God head making manifest to the...
All who receive him and believe in Him
These are the living three personalities of the heavenly
trio in which every soul repenting of their
Sins receiving Christ by a living
Faith to them who are baptized.....**

Don't worry, her version is vastly different and lacked the spiritualism that Boardman used. William Boardman was a Pentecostal Pastor and had written a book in 1858 called "The Higher Christian Life". It would be normal that Sister White would have books from different authors and topics to frame out her library.

But many have been taught NOT according to the Spirit of Prophecy or the biblical support of Christ being in the Spirit AS "the Spirit of Christ". This Spirit originates from the Father and is sent thru His Son and then to us to comfort us, abide with us, dwell with us. And this Spirit can be viewed as a personality or a different characteristic of Christ.

It can also be discussed that this Spirit is likened unto us as a third person, or personality, or different characteristic of Christ. For Christ is in the heavenly sanctuary on our behalf, but sends himself in the Spirit to abide and dwell with us. Again, refer to Manuscript Release 14 as quoted above. This is not what the churches or leaders are teaching today, but it is very much supported in the Spirit of Prophecy, the Bible and it was the belief of our Pioneers.