

Class 4: Who is the Holy Spirit?

Let's begin today by looking at the Nicene Creed our foremost affirmation of faith dating back to 325 and amended in 381 and is known by its Latin word '*credo*'. It comes to us from the Anglican 1662 *Book of Common Prayer*.

We recite it most weeks in our services and liturgy - it is what you are signing up to as your affirmation of faith when you are confirmed. So, it is worth getting familiar with it. It speaks of the Trinity, the Church and orthodox doctrine.

In the year 381 the original creed of 324 was amended to say,

'For us men and our salvation, he came down from Heaven. By the power of the Holy Spirit he became incarnate of the Virgin Mary and was made man.

This asserts four things about the Holy Spirit; that it was by the Spirit that the incarnation took place; that the Spirit is the giver of life; that the Spirit is worshipped and glorified alongside and with the Father and the Son, and that it is the Spirit who speaks through the words of the prophets and preachers.

The Spirit has a separate existence; another indication that the Holy Spirit is a person is that He is not only mentioned along with the Father and the Son as having their nature and character, but He also has His own distinct and separate existence. He is mentioned as descending on Jesus when He was baptized (John 1:33). When the Son came out of the water of baptism, the Spirit descended on Him and the Father spoke from heaven (Matthew 3:16, 17; Luke 3:21, 22).

The Holy Spirit is described in terms that can apply only to God. From these terms we can draw the conclusion that the Holy Spirit shares the divine nature with the Father and the Son and is one with the Father and the Son, but that He is a distinct personality.

Some names of the Spirit 1. "Helper" (John 14:16); "the Holy Spirit" (Luke 11:13); "the Spirit of Jesus" (Acts 16:7); "The Spirit of God" (Rom. 8:9); "the Spirit of Truth" (John 14:17); "the Spirit of glory" (1 Pet. 4:14) C. The Father sent the Spirit into the world through the Son.

He has a mind, an intelligence, wisdom & understanding (Isaiah 11:2 Romans 8:27 1 Corinthians 2:11, 12:8; Ephesians 1:17; 1 Timothy 4:1) Has a will/makes choices (1 Corinthians 12:11) He has emotions, is grieved (Ephesians 4:30, Isaiah 63:10, can be insulted (Hebrews 10:29) Is joyful (1 Thessalonians 1:6, Luke 10:21, Romans 14:17), nurturing - (Isaiah 63:14, John 14:26, Acts 9:31, Romans 8:26) Is love (Romans 5:5) Protects (2 Timothy 1:14) Is affected rebelled against/Resisted (1 Thessalonians 5:19, Psalm 106:33, Acts 7:51) Obeyed (Acts 19:19-21) Blasphemed (Matthew 12:31-32, Mark 3:29) Lied to (Acts 5:3) Tested/Proven (Acts 5:9, 1 John 4:2) Hears and peaks (John 16:13 Mark 13:11 2 Samuel 23:2, 1 Chronicles 18:23, Acts 2:4, Acts 20:23, 2 Peter 1:21), Dwells within us (1 Corinthians 6:19, Ezekiel 36:27, John 14:17, Romans 8:11, James 4:5)

Pentecost; the book of Acts describes when the Holy Spirit descended on the disciples and gave them powers, or 'gifts of the Spirit' which St Paul goes on to describe as 'fruits'; abilities, qualities and virtues that are from God.

St Paul tells us that the Spirit perfects us in holiness, enables us to pray and we have the instinct to call out '

Abba, Father' because God has sent His Spirit into our hearts.

The Spirit is particularly focussed in when the community of the worshipping church is gathered together. (Tomlin p86)

The Spirit is a gift.

We EXPERIENCE the Holy Spirit in prayer and worship. We experience Love. The relationship between Father Son and Holy Spirit is pure and boundless love. The Spirit is 'the giver of life', it is the 'holy' Spirit so it makes things holy, to make us our true selves as we were made to be.

Like our breathing He works within us to build God's Kingdom (Luke 17:21 - 'is within us' or 'amongst us')