

## Revitalize: Who is the Holy Spirit?

I confess. In all the years I've studied the names of God, I have overlooked the Holy Spirit. As part of the Trinity, the Holy Spirit is just as important as the Father and the Son, but I admit, I neglect my study of the Holy Spirit. I think the problem is, He's just not as dramatized in the Bible. He's the last (but not really) to make an appearance, and He's really hard to imagine. Think about it, He's a spirit—I mean God is the Father, we can picture that. Jesus was a baby and a boy and a teacher and died on the cross. We can all picture that. The Holy Spirit is well—umm, mysterious, incorporeal, quiet and a little magical sounding.

So let's debunk some myths about the Holy Spirit.

#1. The Spirit has only been around since Jesus died.

Sorry. Genesis 1:2 says, "...and the Spirit of God was hovering over the waters." Spirit of God is one of the names of the Holy Spirit.

#2. The Holy Spirit is formless.

Sorry. We don't see Him in human form but He has been seen as a dove descending on Jesus. "As soon as Jesus was baptized, he went up out of the water. At that moment heaven was opened, and he saw the Spirit of God descending like a dove and lighting on him." Matthew 3:16. The Holy Spirit was also seen as tongues of fire. (Acts 2:1-4) on Pentecost. Some scholars also believe that the pillar of cloud by day and pillar of fire by night that led the Israelites was also the Holy Spirit.

#3. The Holy Spirit is like the Force from Star Wars.

Yes and No!

Obi Wan tells Luke Skywalker that the Force is an energy field that gives the Jedi his power..."it surrounds us, penetrates us and binds the galaxy together". The Holy Spirit is not just an energy field; He is a being, part of the Trinity of God. (Acts 5:3&4; 2 Corinthians 3:17)

The Holy Spirit does give us power. "The Holy Spirit will come upon you and the power of the Most High will overshadow you." Luke 1:35

The Holy Spirit does more than penetrate us. He indwells. That's intentional, symbiotic. "You, however, are controlled not by the sinful nature but by the Spirit, if the Spirit of God lives in you...." Romans 8:9 (By the way, the Force has no control, Obi Wan says so, the users control the Force.)

And there is no dark side to the Holy Spirit, He is all good. "Teach me to do your will, for you are my God; may your good Spirit lead me on level ground." Psalm 143:10 In fact one of the gifts of the Holy Spirit is discerning of spirits (I Corinthians 12). This gift helps you know right from wrong, good from evil.

If you don't think the Holy Spirit is mentioned much in the Bible, especially the Old Testament, then pray for awareness of this part of the Trinity. Every time the word Spirit is capitalized in the Bible—

that is the Holy Spirit. This part of God may be incognito sometimes, but don't underestimate His importance. He is all God, all powerful, and grants us access to that power.

Nancy