**WIND & FIRE -- WEEK 1: THE PERSON OF THE HOLY SPIRIT**

**Getting to Know You:**

In your church experience, has the Holy Spirit been at the front of the stage, backstage, or nowhere to be seen?

There has been, at times, a lot of confusion about the Holy Spirit. Why do you think that is?

**Watch**: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=8a-LhNxPmbs>

What is the Holy Spirit? by Time of Grace Ministries (2:09)

1. Why is it hard to define the Holy Spirit?

 2. Pastor Mike asked, “What would happen if the Holy Spirit, the giver of life, the giver of faith, the one who produces love and peace and joy in our hearts would be a person to you? How would your life look different?” How would you answer this question?

**Read Matthew 3:13-17:** The Baptism of Jesus

***“13*** *Then Jesus came from Galilee to the Jordan to be baptized by John.* ***14*** *But John tried to deter him, saying, “I need to be baptized by you, and do you come to me?”* ***15*** *Jesus replied, “Let it be so now; it is proper for us to do this to fulfill all righteousness.” Then John consented.* ***16*** *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 alighting on him.* ***17*** *And a voice from heaven said, “This is my Son, whom I love; with him I am well pleased.”*

3. In this passage, we can see all three members of the Trinity at once. What are the Father, Son, and Spirit doing in this passage?

4. The doctrine of the Trinity says that God exists as three persons and each person is fully God. Can you think of other places in the Bible where the Father, the Spirit, and the Son are all mentioned together? How do these passages show that the Spirit is God?

(If you are stuck, look at Luke 1:35, John 14:16-17, Matthew 28:19, 2 Corinthians 13:14, 1 Peter 1:1-2…)

5. Another part of the doctrine of the Trinity is that the Father is not the Son and the Son is not the Spirit. In other words, each are three distinct persons. How do you see that in the baptism of Jesus?

6. How does the Holy Spirit’s name make it hard to think of Him as a person? How does the Bible’s use of pronouns for the Spirit remind us that the Spirit is personal not a “force”? (i.e. Why should we call the Spirit “He”, not “It”?)

7. What is the danger of seeing the Holy Spirit as an impersonal force? How is the concept of the Holy Spirit as a person both encouraging and challenging?

8. The Hebrew word for Spirit is “ruach” (pronounced “RU-ock”) and the Greek word for Spirit is “pneuma” (pronounced “new-ma”). Both words mean “breath or wind”. What does the metaphor of wind tell us about the Holy Spirit?

9. Sometimes we hold the Holy Spirit at arm’s length, because He is mysterious and hard to define. Instead of being uncertain, how can we dive into the wonder of the mystery of the Holy Spirit?

10. The Heidelberg Catechism Question and Answer 53 says,

  *Q. “What do you believe concerning the Holy Spirit?*

1. *“First, he is, together with the Father and the Son, true and eternal God. Second,he is also given to me, to make me by true faith share in Christ and all his benefits, to comfort me, and to remain with me forever.”*

The job of the Holy Spirit is to point to Jesus and say, “Look at Jesus.” How is that seen in both the Matthew 3 passage and Heidelberg Q & A 53?

11. “It is tempting to understand the Spirit as an impersonal force fulfilling the purposes of God mechanically. However, the Scriptures paint a different picture, and they portray the Spirit as anything but impersonal. The third person of the Trinity is personal, and His role in the life and ministry of Jesus attests to this fact. The Spirit is the lifelong companion and friend of Jesus, and the two were never, nor ever will be, apart. This revelation is marvelous, and our wonder should increase as we consider Jesus’ role in sending His Spirit, His companion and friend, to dwell with us.” SInclair Ferguson, *Who is the Holy Spirit?*

Considering this, what role does the Holy Spirit play? Is He front stage, back stage, or something else?

**Live it out:** This week, if possible, try to do one of the following items.

* Challenge yourself to not call the Holy Spirit “It” this week. Remember, He is a person.
* Pray and ask God to help you sense the Holy Spirit in your everyday life, whether through comfort, intercession, or conviction.
* Read the Athanasian Creed. This short standard of the faith gives a good description of the role of the Holy Spirit in the Trinity. It can be found at

<https://www.crcna.org/welcome/beliefs/creeds/athanasian-creed>