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Caressing the Creed, Part 9

I Believe in the Holy Ghost

Text: Ezekiel 36:22-32; John 14:15-18, 25-26

Thomas Lindberg writes that Norwegian explorer Roald Amundsen, was the first to discover the magnetic meridian of the North Pole and to discover the South Pole. On one of his trips, Amundsen took a homing pigeon with him. When he had finally reached the top of the world, he opened the bird's cage and set it free. Imagine the delight

of Amundsen's wife, back in Norway, when she looked up from the doorway of her home and saw the pigeon circling in the sky above. No doubt she exclaimed, "He's alive! My husband is still alive!"

So it was when Jesus ascended. He was gone, but the disciples clung to his promise to send them the Holy Spirit. What joy, then, when the dovelike Holy Spirit descended at Pentecost. The disciples had with them the continual reminder that Jesus was alive and victorious at the right of the Father. This continues to be the Spirit's message.

We believe in the Holy Ghost. However, two pertinent questions would be, who is the Holy Spirit and what does he do?

## **1. The identity of the Holy Ghost**

Note that the Holy Spirit is a person. The Holy Spirit is referred to as "He", not "it"(John 15:16, 17). There is an old foot-stomping gospel song that says, "I got it, I got it. I got it, I got it. Something about the Holy Ghost I just can't explain, but I got it." We are trinitarians who believe that God has expressed Himself in three distinct, equal persons. If that is true, you cannot describe the Trinity as God the Father(He), God the Son (He) and then God the Holy Spirit (It). No, we see the Holy Ghost as Person. Look at John 16:13. Just before we examine why the Holy Spirit came and we celebrate His activity in our lives, note that He is spoken of as if He has a personality. We are not speaking of some impersonal force here or some power that makes you shake or fall out on the floor or speak in unintelligible languages. We are speaking of God in the

form of the Spirit. In John 14:16, when the Spirit is spoken of, Jesus says he will send to us *another* Helper. There are two Greek words for *another*. *Allos* means another of the same kind. *Heteros* means another of a different kind. The Greek for *another*, in John 14:16, *allos*, "an other of the same kind". So, we don't have a Spirit coming who is different in substance from the Father and the Son. He is, as they are.

**2. What does the Holy Spirit do?** What is His role in the believer's life?

From the NT lesson:

A. He comforts or helps the believer (14:16).

B. He takes up residence in the believer (14:17)

C. He will teach the believer (14:26).

D. He will remind the believer of what Jesus said and taught (14:26; 15:26)

Occasionally, you'll hear of a Holy Ghost rally or a Holy Spirit conference. The Holy Spirit would, Himself, probably not endorse an event in which He would be highlighted.

The Holy Spirit comes to turn the spotlight on Jesus!

E. He will convict the world of sin, righteousness and judgement (16:8-11).

F. He will guide the believer in truth (16:13).

G. He will glorify Jesus (16:13). Note, again, that He doesn't push Himself as much as He puts the spotlight on Jesus the Christ. As important as the work of the Holy Spirit is, in guiding, teaching, sanctifying and helping the believer, He is never to usurp the place of Christ in our

thinking. The Spirit, Himself, wants us to think of Christ.

The Spirit testifies of Christ (15:26).

The Spirit of God produces in us the fruit of Christ-like character, so that we may be authentically Christ-ian.

I believe in the Holy Ghost. I believe a relationship with Him is necessary if I am to live a life that honors, glorifies and points to Christ.

Every person cannot know this relationship with the Holy Ghost of which Jesus speaks in John 14-16.

Another name for the Holy Spirit is the Spirit of truth. Come here and let me show you why this relationship with the Holy Spirit is not universal. Look at John 14:17.

The world(those apart from Christ) cannot receive Christ ***because***

A. **They don't see Him** (John 3:3 ..."unless one is born again, he cannot **see** the kingdom of God").

B. **They don't know Him** (1 Corinthians 2:14 : "...the natural man does not receive the things of the Spirit of God, for they are foolishness to him; nor can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned.")

We have looked at the identity of the Holy Spirit (He is a Person). We have looked at the role of the Holy Spirit in the believer's life. I offer a declaration and a question.

I believe in the Holy Ghost!!

Do you?

Amen

