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Teaching Letter

The Holy Spirit Eternal, Omniscient, Omnipresent



Part 2/6

Who Is the Holy Spirit?
By Derek Prince

As Christians, we understand that love for God is fundamental to all spiritual life. We can know and love God as our Father and Jesus, His Son, as our elder brother—the first two Persons of the Godhead. But when it comes to knowing and loving the Holy Spirit, how do we enter into a relationship with this mysterious third person of the Trinity?

As I said in my previous letter, the purpose of this Teaching Letter series, *Who Is the Holy Spirit?*, is to help you understand Who the Holy Spirit is. My hope is that as we search the Scriptures together, you will grow in knowledge, in wonder, and in love for Him. In this second edition of our series we will look at three profoundly significant adjectives that apply to the Holy Spirit: **eternal**, **omniscient**, and **omnipresent**.

Eternal

My own relationship with the Holy Spirit began many years ago, in the earliest days of my exploration of Christianity. At the close of one of the first Pentecostal services I attended, the preacher asked me, "Do you believe that you are a sinner?" At that time, I was a professional philosopher and had just completed my dissertation on "definitions" at Cambridge University. In my mind, I immediately ran through the various possible definitions of a "sinner." All of them applied to me exactly! So I answered, "Yes, I believe I'm a sinner!"

The preacher then asked, "Do you believe that Christ died for your sins?" I thought this over and then replied, "To tell you the truth, I can't see what the death of Jesus Christ twenty centuries ago could have to do with the sins that I've committed in my lifetime."

The preacher was wise enough not to argue with me, but I am sure he prayed for me. A few days later, I had a powerful encounter with Jesus Christ which changed the whole course of my life. In particular, the Bible became a living, meaningful book.

Some time later as I was reading the 9th chapter of Hebrews, I came across this phrase in verse 14: "Christ, who through **the eternal Spirit** offered Himself without spot to God." Suddenly I grasped the significance of the word

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"eternal." The meaning for this word is far more expansive than something which simply lasts an extremely long time. "Eternal" denotes an existence which is above and beyond the limitations of time—something which simultaneously encompasses the past, the present, and the future.

You see, when Jesus offered Himself on the cross, His sacrifice was not limited to the time at which He died. Through the eternal Spirit, it addressed the sins of all men of all ages—past, present, and future. I came to understand that His sacrifice included the sins I had committed over twenty centuries later.

From Age to Age

Clearly, the Greek adjective "eternal" has an extremely expansive meaning. It is derived from the noun *aion*, from which we get the English word "aeon." An aion is a measurement of time and occurs in a variety of expressions, as we see in the following literal Biblical translations:

> Hebrews 7:24: "And he, because of his remaining—to the age, hath the priesthood not transient" (ylt). This is referring to the duration of the present age. The nkjv translates this verse "because He continues forever."
>
> Jude 25: "From before the whole age, and now, and to all the ages" (darby). The nkjv translation is "both now and forever."
>
> Galatians 1:5: "To whom is the glory to the ages of the ages" (ylt). The nkjv is "forever and ever."

It is obvious to me that some of the English translations do not even begin to convey the depth of meaning in the Greek phrases. These expressions—and others like them—fill me with a sense of awe. They are like a little drop of moisture suspended above a bottomless chasm that separates two mountains too high for me to climb. My mind cannot fully comprehend that there could be even one age made up of ages, much less that there are ages made up of such ages. Yet the eternal Holy Spirit encompasses them all, stretching from the measureless past and on into the measureless future.

I began to apprehend in a new way the title under which God is endlessly worshiped in heaven:

> Holy, holy, holy, Lord God Almighty, Who [eternally] was and is and is to come! (Revelation 4:8)

Omniscient

Closely related to the eternal nature of the Holy Spirit is His omniscience. In 1 John the apostle places before us a profound, yet simple revelation: **God knows all things**.

> God is greater than our hearts, and knows all things. (1 John 3:20)

There is nothing God does not know. From the tiniest insect in the earth to the farthest star in space, there is nothing God does not completely know.

God knows things about us that we ourselves do not know. For instance, He knows the number of hairs each of us has on our head. "But the very hairs of your head are all numbered" (Matthew 10:30).

God knew the number of inhabitants in the city of Nineveh, "that great city, in which there are more than one hundred and twenty thousand persons" (Jonah 4:11). He knew—and controlled—the growth of the plant that shaded Jonah. He also knew—and controlled—the action of the worm that caused the plant to wither.

> And the Lord God prepared a plant and made it come up over Jonah ... But as morning dawned the next day God prepared a worm, and it so damaged the plant that it withered. (Jonah 4:6–7)

In 1 Corinthians 2:9–10, Paul speaks about the things which "eye has not seen, nor ear heard, nor have entered into the heart of man." Then he continues, "But God has revealed them to us through His Spirit. **For the Spirit searches all things**, yes, the deep things of God."

The Holy Spirit not only plumbs the deepest depths; He also scales the highest heights of all that was, that is, and that is to come. His knowledge is infinite and limitless. In that respect, He also knows us to intimate depths, and He wants us to know Him! It is in the light of this infinite knowledge that you and I must be prepared to give an account of ourselves to God. "And there is no creature

hidden from His sight, but all things are naked and open to the eyes of Him to whom we must give account" (Hebrews 4:13).

God Is in Control

When we comprehend the completeness of God's knowledge—and in particular His foreknowledge—it gives us the assurance that no matter what happens, God is never taken by surprise. There is no such thing as an emergency in the kingdom of heaven. Not merely does God know the end from the beginning—He Himself is both the Beginning and the End (Revelation 21:6). He is always in total control.

In particular, God knows those whom He has chosen to be with Him in eternity.

> For whom He foreknew, He also predestined to be conformed to the image of His Son, that He might be the firstborn among many brethren. (Romans 8:29)

If, by the mercy and grace of God, we make it through to that glorious, eternal destination, Jesus will never greet anyone with the words, "I never expected to see you here!" Rather, He will say, "My child, I've been waiting for you. We couldn't sit down to the marriage feast until you came."

At that glorious banquet, I believe, every place setting will carry the name of the person for whom it is prepared. Until the number of the redeemed is complete, God waits with amazing patience, "not willing that any should perish but that all should come to repentance" (2 Peter 3:9).

Omnipresent

Let's look now at the third significant adjective that applies to the Holy Spirit: **omnipresence**. When we say that God is **omnipresent**, we mean that He is present everywhere at the same time. In Jeremiah 23:23–24 God Himself affirms this:

> "Am I a God near at hand," says the Lord, "And not a God afar off? Can anyone hide himself in secret places, so I shall not see him?" says the Lord; "Do I not fill heaven and earth?" says the Lord.

How can this be? We know that God is seated on His throne in heaven, with Jesus at His right hand. How then can He fill heaven and earth with His presence?

In Psalm 139:7–12 David supplies the answer. First, he asks:

> Where can I go from Your Spirit? Or where can I flee from Your presence? (v. 7)

This reveals that it is through His Spirit that God makes Himself present everywhere at the same time. Then David fills in the vivid details:

> If I ascend into heaven, You are there; if I make my bed in hell, behold, You are there. If I take the wings of the morning, and dwell in the uttermost parts of the sea, even there Your hand shall lead me, and Your right hand shall hold me. If I say, "Surely the darkness shall fall on me", even the night shall be light about me; indeed, the darkness shall not hide from You, but the night shines as the day; the darkness and the light are both alike to You. (Psalm 139:8–12)

No matter where we may go, God is there by His Spirit—invisible, often imperceptible, but inescapable. For the unbeliever, this may be a terrifying thought. But for the believer, it is a comforting, strengthening assurance. No matter where we may find ourselves, "even there Your hand shall lead me, and Your right hand shall hold me" (Psalm 139:10).

In the New Testament, Jesus Himself gives us this assurance: "I will never leave you nor forsake you" (Hebrews 13:5). At times, we may not be in any way conscious of His presence. But by His Holy Spirit, He is there. Our surroundings may appear totally dark, but as David said, "the darkness shall not hide from You ..." (Psalm 139:12).

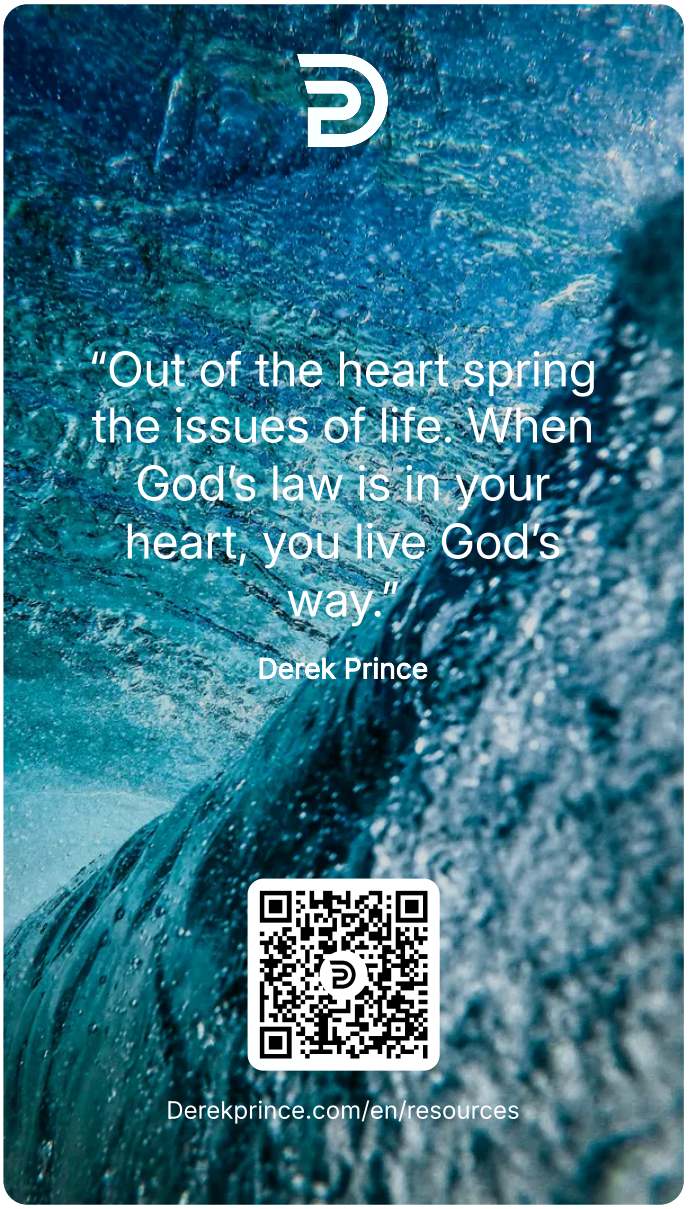
You and I need to cultivate an inner sensitivity to the Holy Spirit that does not depend on the evidence of our physical senses. When our senses tell us nothing about His presence, or even when they may seem to deny it, there should be an area in the inmost depths of our own spirit that maintains an uninterrupted awareness of the Holy Spirit's presence. Then we shall more fully understand why He is given the title of "the Comforter" (kjv) or "the Helper" (nkjv) (see John 14:26.).

There is no more appropriate way to close this letter than by thanking the Father for sending us the Holy Spirit. Will

you join with me in the following prayer?

Dear Heavenly Father, Thank You for sending me the Holy Spirit, my Comforter and Helper. Even when I can't feel it, I thank You that He is always with me, strengthening and assuring me with His presence. Thank You for His power and protection over me and those I love. Father, I now ask that You would please allow me to come into a deeper relationship with the Holy Spirit. Help me to love and honor Him as I ought to do. And I thank You in advance for answering my prayer, as I make all these requests in the Name of Your precious Son, Jesus. Amen.

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