



NO MATTER  
WHAT COMES  
THROUGH THOSE  
DOORS

A SOUTHEAST SERMON SERIES

# Holy Spirit Tour Guide



It would be hard to get to know an invisible friend—but that’s exactly who the Holy Spirit is to us! So often, we misunderstand the Spirit. We tend to push the Spirit into one of two extremes, either ignoring Him or abusing Him. We sometimes feel uncomfortable even talking about the Spirit because we’ve heard or seen things that seem foreign to us.

So, rather than just going with what we’ve seen before, let’s go on a guided tour of some of what the Bible says about the Spirit.

## Genesis 1:2 NIV

Now the earth was formless and empty, darkness was over the surface of the deep, and the *Spirit of God* was hovering over the waters.

- The first place the Holy Spirit appears in Scripture is Genesis 1:2.
- We aren't exactly sure what "hovering" means, but Bible scholars suggest it could be like organizing or perfecting. This paints a picture of God the Father speaking things into existence and God the Holy Spirit putting things where they belong.
- Water in the Old Testament can be a symbol for chaos and disorder. The Spirit hovering over water shows He is working to bring order and peace.

## Exodus 31:1-5 NIV

Then the Lord said to Moses, "See, I have chosen Bezalel son of Uri, the son of Hur, of the tribe of Judah, and I have filled him with the *Spirit of God*, with wisdom, with understanding, with knowledge and with all kinds of skills—to make artistic designs for work in gold, silver and bronze, to cut and set stones, to work in wood, and to engage in all kinds of crafts."

- The Bible says Bezalel might have been the first person filled with the Spirit.
- God chose Him and gave him spiritual gifts to build holy objects for worship.
  - Who else did the Holy Spirit fill in the Old Testament?

## Nehemiah 9:30 NIV

For many years you were patient with them. By your *Spirit* you warned them through your prophets. Yet they paid no attention, so you gave them into the hands of the neighboring peoples.

- God is praised for His patience with Israel because they constantly disobeyed Him.
- The Spirit worked through the prophets to warn Israel of their disobedience.

## Matthew 28:19 NIV

Therefore go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of *the Holy Spirit...*

- The Spirit is included on the same level as God the Father and Jesus Christ. He is God.
- Becoming a Christian means we belong to God the Father, Jesus Christ, and the Holy Spirit.

## John 14:16-17 NIV

And I will ask the Father, and he will give you another advocate to help you and be with you forever—the Spirit of truth. The world cannot accept him, because it neither sees him nor knows him. But you know him, for he lives with you and will be in you.

- Jesus called the Spirit “another advocate.” (In Greek that’s ***allos parakletos***). There are two Greek words for “another”: ***allos***, which means “another of the same kind,” and ***heteros***, which means “another of a different kind.” Jesus picks ***allos***, which tells us the Spirit is very similar to Jesus.
- Jesus described the Spirit with the word “truth.” That means we can trust the Spirit because He will be honest and tell us like it is.
- The Spirit is always close by. He couldn’t get any closer than living in us.
- “Advocates” (some translations say “helpers”) were people called to come alongside someone else. The Greek word is ***paraclete***.
  - A paraclete could be a lawyer to help with a case.
  - A paraclete could stay with a sick person until they got better or died.
  - A paraclete could help resolve conflict between people with a disagreement.

## Acts 13:1-3 NIV

Now in the church at Antioch there were prophets and teachers: Barnabas, Simeon called Niger, Lucius of Cyrene, Manaen (who had been brought up with Herod the tetrarch) and Saul. While they were worshiping the Lord and fasting, *the Holy Spirit* said, "Set apart for me Barnabas and Saul for the work to which I have called them." So after they had fasted and prayed, they placed their hands on them and sent them off.

- The Holy Spirit is often the expression of God's voice or direction to communicate with us.
- There is some connection between worship, fasting, and the Spirit. The Spirit happened to speak to them while they focused their attention on God.
- The Spirit had a job for Barnabas and Saul. He spoke to those gathered about His plan and used this dynamic duo to preach the Gospel in places that hadn't heard about Jesus yet. (See what happens in the rest of Acts 13 and 14.)
  - What might the Spirit set us apart for?

## Romans 8:26-27 NIV

In the same way, the Spirit helps us in our weakness. We do not know what we ought to pray for, but the Spirit himself intercedes for us through wordless groans. And he who searches our hearts knows the mind of the Spirit, because the Spirit intercedes for God's people in accordance with the will of God.

- Paul wrote in the verses before this about how life on earth is painful, but we have hope that God will make everything perfect when Jesus returns.
- We learn from these two verses that the Spirit helps us in our weakness and pain. When we don't know what to pray for because of how difficult life can be, the Spirit takes the cries of our hearts right to God.
- The last phrase shows the Spirit knows how to connect what we need with God's plan. The Spirit brings our desperate needs to God's throne room and works out a plan that is good for us and God.

## 1 Peter 1:12 NIV

It was revealed to them that they were not serving themselves but you, when they spoke of the things that have now been told you by those who have preached the gospel to you by the Holy Spirit sent from heaven. Even angels long to look into these things.

- Peter said the prophets in the Old Testament were enabled by the Spirit to “preach” that Jesus would come one day.
- Peter recognized the Holy Spirit was responsible for preaching the Gospel of Jesus. The Spirit must be doing the same thing today.
- This is such great news that even the angels want to pay attention to what is happening!

# Summary

- The Holy Spirit helped with creation and is God.
- The Holy Spirit is with us, helps us, and prays for us.
- The Holy Spirit cares about God’s mission in the world and calls us to a purpose.
- The Holy Spirit gives us abilities to serve God.
- The Holy Spirit wants people to know Jesus Christ.

## Want to Learn More?

You can continue the tour on your own! All you need is a Bible, journal, and [blueletterbible.org](https://blueletterbible.org).

1. At [blueletterbible.org](https://blueletterbible.org), you will see a **Search the Bible** box at the top of the page.
2. Type **Spirit** into the search box.
3. Select your preferred Bible translation.
4. Press “enter” or click the green magnifying glass.
5. The website will give you a list of every verse in that Bible translation with “Spirit” in it.  
**PLEASE NOTE:** There is disagreement if some passages are talking about the Holy Spirit. Bible translations use ***Spirit*** for the Holy Spirit and ***spirit*** for other things. You’ll get both in your search results. Focus on verses with ***Spirit*** (capital S) for your study.
6. Read all those verses in context. That means read the story, chapter, or section the verse is in. Think about how the verse relates to what is going on in context.
7. As you read verses, take notes somewhere, like in a journal. Write down your observations, thoughts, and questions (similar to what you’ve just read in this guided tour).
8. You’ll probably start to notice some patterns. For example, verses that describe the Holy Spirit in a metaphor like wind, fire, or water. Another example might be passages where the Spirit is described teaching or instructing someone. Keep lists of verses that you see patterns in.
9. As you study more passages, carefully consider the bigger picture of how the Bible describes the Spirit to us. Write down your thoughts and questions.
10. Try to answer your questions by searching for other passages, talking with trusted Christians, and asking your pastor for resources.



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