

Lesson 7 - The Person and Ministry of the Holy Spirit

Recognized as a person.

List the number of times the Holy Spirit is referred to as "He" or "Him" in John 14:17.

The Holy Spirit as "He" in John 14:17

The Verse (ESV)

John 14:17 - "even the Spirit of truth, whom the world cannot receive, because it neither sees him nor knows him. You know him, for he dwells with you and will be in you."

Count of Personal Pronouns

In John 14:17, the Holy Spirit is referred to with masculine personal pronouns THREE times:

1. "him" - "whom the world cannot receive, because it neither sees him"
2. "him" - "nor knows him"
3. "he" - "You know him, for he dwells with you"

(Note: There's a fourth "him" - "You know him" - making it actually four times total that masculine personal pronouns are used)

The Significance

Why This Matters

The Greek word for "Spirit" (pneuma) is grammatically neuter, which would normally take the pronoun "it" in Greek. However, Jesus deliberately uses the masculine pronoun (ekeinos - "he/that one") when referring to the Holy Spirit.

This is significant because:

1. The Holy Spirit is a Person, not a force - Jesus treats the Spirit as a personal being with personality, will, and relational capacity
2. The Holy Spirit is masculine in nature - Though God is spirit and beyond gender, the consistent use of masculine pronouns throughout Scripture reveals how God has chosen to reveal Himself
3. The Holy Spirit has personal attributes:
 - He can be known (John 14:17)
 - He dwells with and in believers (John 14:17)
 - He teaches (John 14:26)

- He testifies (John 15:26)
- He guides (John 16:13)
- He speaks (John 16:13)
- He can be grieved (Ephesians 4:30)
- He can be resisted (Acts 7:51)

The Trinity Revealed

This verse beautifully shows the distinct personhood of the Holy Spirit within the Trinity. He is not merely God's "power" or "influence"—He is the third Person of the Godhead, co-equal with the Father and the Son, worthy of worship and obedience.

Answer Summary

John 14:17 refers to the Holy Spirit with masculine personal pronouns FOUR times: "him" (twice), "him" (again), and "he."

This emphasizes the Holy Spirit's personhood and distinct identity within the Trinity.

Describe the Holy Spirit's attribute of intellect as found in Romans 8:27, 1 Corinthians 2:10, and 1 Corinthians 2:11.

The Holy Spirit's Attribute of Intellect

Introduction

One of the clearest proofs that the Holy Spirit is a Person and not merely an impersonal force is His possession of intellect—the capacity to know, understand, search, and comprehend. These three passages in Romans and 1 Corinthians reveal the Holy Spirit's divine mind and knowledge.

Romans 8:27 - The Spirit's Knowing Mind

The Text (ESV)

"And he who searches hearts knows what is the mind of the Spirit, because the Spirit intercedes for the saints according to the will of God."

What This Reveals About the Spirit's Intellect

1. The Spirit Has a Mind

- The phrase "the mind of the Spirit" (Greek: phronēma tou pneumatōs) indicates the Spirit possesses thought, intention, and mental capacity
- A "mind" requires personhood—only persons have minds that think, plan, and understand
- This isn't abstract or symbolic language; it's describing the Spirit's actual cognitive function

2. The Spirit's Mind Can Be Known

- God the Father "knows what is the mind of the Spirit"
- This shows interpersonal communication within the Trinity
- The Father understands the Spirit's thoughts, desires, and intentions
- This is relational knowledge between two Persons, not a force being directed

3. The Spirit Acts With Purpose and Intelligence

- The Spirit "intercedes for the saints according to the will of God"
- Intercession requires:
 - Understanding our needs (even unspoken ones - v. 26)
 - Knowledge of God's will
 - Wisdom to pray perfectly on our behalf
 - Communication with the Father
- This is intelligent, purposeful action, not mechanical operation

The Implication

The Holy Spirit thinks, understands, and acts with divine intelligence. He doesn't randomly move or mindlessly operate—He knows, comprehends, and acts according to perfect wisdom.

1 Corinthians 2:10 - The Spirit's Searching Knowledge

The Text (ESV)

"These things God has revealed to us through the Spirit. For the Spirit searches everything, even the depths of God."

What This Reveals About the Spirit's Intellect

1. The Spirit Reveals Truth

- "God has revealed to us through the Spirit"
- Revelation requires intelligence—the ability to communicate truth
- The Spirit doesn't merely transmit information mechanically; He actively reveals, which involves understanding what needs to be communicated and how

2. The Spirit Searches

- The Greek word "searches" (ereunaō) means to investigate, examine thoroughly, explore deeply

- Searching requires:

- Consciousness and awareness
- The ability to investigate and analyze
- Mental capacity to explore and understand
- Curiosity and purpose

- An impersonal force doesn't "search"—only an intelligent being searches

3. The Spirit's Knowledge Is Unlimited

- He searches "everything" (panta) - all things, without exception
- He even searches "the depths of God" (ta bathē tou theou)
- This means the Spirit comprehends:
 - God's infinite wisdom
 - God's eternal purposes
 - God's hidden mysteries
 - The profoundest truths of divine nature

4. The Spirit Possesses Divine Omniscience

- Only God knows "the depths of God"
- The Spirit's ability to search and know these depths proves His deity
- This is comprehensive, infinite knowledge—an attribute only God possesses

The Implication

The Holy Spirit doesn't just know facts—He actively investigates, comprehends the deepest mysteries of God, and reveals truth to believers. This requires supreme intelligence and divine omniscience.

1 Corinthians 2:11 - The Spirit's Complete Understanding

The Text (ESV)

"For who knows a person's thoughts except the spirit of that person, which is in him? So also no one comprehends the thoughts of God except the Spirit of God."

What This Reveals About the Spirit's Intellect

1. Paul Uses a Human Analogy

- Just as your human spirit knows your own thoughts
- No one else can fully know what you're thinking unless you reveal it

- Your thoughts are intimate, internal, and inaccessible to others

2. The Spirit Knows God's Thoughts

- "No one comprehends the thoughts of God except the Spirit of God"
- The Greek word for "comprehends" (eg-nōken) means to know fully, understand completely, perceive accurately
- This is not partial knowledge—it's total, exhaustive comprehension

3. This Proves the Spirit's Deity If the Spirit were a created being or an impersonal force:

- He could NOT fully know God's thoughts
- He would be external to God
- His knowledge would be limited and derivative

But since the Spirit does fully comprehend God's thoughts:

- He must be internal to God's being
- He must be fully divine
- He must possess infinite intelligence
- He must be God Himself

4. The Spirit's Knowledge Is Intrinsic, Not Learned

- The Spirit doesn't study God to learn about Him
- He doesn't receive revelation second-hand
- He inherently knows because He is God
- His knowledge is intuitive, immediate, and complete

5. Only the Spirit Can Reveal God to Us

- Since no one else knows God's thoughts
- And since we cannot discover them on our own
- We are entirely dependent on the Spirit to reveal God to us
- This makes the Spirit absolutely essential for salvation, sanctification, and knowing God

The Implication

The Holy Spirit possesses the same infinite intelligence as God the Father and God the Son. He knows everything God knows because He is God. His intellect is divine, unlimited, and perfect.

Summary: The Holy Spirit's Intellectual Attributes

From These Three Passages, We Learn:

1. The Spirit Has a Mind (Romans 8:27)

- He possesses thoughts, intentions, and purposes
- His mind can be known by God the Father
- He thinks and acts intelligently

2. The Spirit Searches All Things (1 Corinthians 2:10)

- He actively investigates and explores
- He comprehends even "the depths of God"
- His knowledge is comprehensive and unlimited
- He reveals divine truth to believers

3. The Spirit Knows God Completely (1 Corinthians 2:11)

- He comprehends all of God's thoughts
- His knowledge is intrinsic, not learned
- Only He can reveal God to humanity
- This proves His full deity

Theological Implications

1. The Spirit Is a Person, Not a Force

Intellect requires personhood. An impersonal force doesn't:

- Have a mind
- Search for truth
- Comprehend thoughts
- Communicate understanding

The Spirit does all these things, proving He is a divine Person.

2. The Spirit Is Fully God

Only God possesses:

- Omniscience (knowing all things)
- The ability to search and know God's depths
- Complete comprehension of divine thoughts

The Spirit has all these attributes, proving He is fully divine.

3. The Spirit Is Essential for Understanding God

- Without the Spirit, we cannot know God (1 Corinthians 2:11)
- The Spirit reveals what God wants us to know (1 Corinthians 2:10)

- The Spirit intercedes with perfect understanding (Romans 8:27)
- We are completely dependent on His illuminating work

4. The Spirit's Intellect Benefits Believers

In Prayer:

- He knows our needs better than we do
- He intercedes with perfect understanding
- He communicates our groans to the Father (Romans 8:26-27)

In Revelation:

- He reveals God's truth to us
- He illuminates Scripture
- He teaches us all things (John 14:26)

In Sanctification:

- He knows God's will perfectly
- He guides us into all truth (John 16:13)
- He transforms us according to divine wisdom

Practical Application

What This Means for You

1. Trust the Spirit's Teaching

- When you read Scripture, ask the Spirit to illuminate it
- He knows what God means and can reveal it to you
- His understanding is perfect and complete

2. Depend on the Spirit's Intercession

- When you don't know how to pray, trust that He does
- He understands your situation perfectly
- He prays according to God's will, not your limited perspective

3. Submit to the Spirit's Leading

- He knows the path you should take
- His guidance is based on perfect knowledge
- Trust His wisdom over your own understanding

4. Worship the Spirit as God

- He is not a lesser deity or a created being
- He possesses divine intelligence and omniscience
- He deserves your worship, obedience, and reverence

Conclusion

The Holy Spirit is not an impersonal force, energy, or influence. He is the third Person of the Trinity—fully God, possessing infinite intelligence, perfect knowledge, and complete understanding of all things.

He has:

- A mind that thinks and purposes (Romans 8:27)
- Searching knowledge that investigates even God's depths (1 Corinthians 2:10)
- Complete comprehension of all God's thoughts (1 Corinthians 2:11)

Because of His intellect:

- He can reveal God to you
- He can teach you truth
- He can guide you perfectly
- He can intercede for you with complete understanding

Trust Him. Follow Him. Worship Him.

He is God, and His knowledge is infinite.

Describe the Holy Spirit's attribute of emotion as found in Ephesians 4:30.

The Holy Spirit's Attribute of Emotion

The Text: Ephesians 4:30 (ESV)

"And do not grieve the Holy Spirit of God, by whom you were sealed for the day of redemption."

The Command: "Do Not Grieve"

The Meaning of "Grieve"

The Greek word is "lupeō" (λυπέω), which means:

- To cause sorrow or pain
- To make sad
- To distress deeply
- To wound emotionally

This is the same word used elsewhere in Scripture for:

- Deep human sorrow - "He began to be sorrowful and troubled" (Matthew 26:37, describing Jesus in Gethsemane)
- Emotional pain - "They were very sorrowful" (Matthew 17:23)
- Grief over loss - Mary and Martha grieving Lazarus (John 11:33)

This is not a metaphor or figure of speech. Paul uses the literal word for emotional grief.

What This Reveals About the Holy Spirit

1. The Spirit Has Real Emotions

Only persons can grieve. You cannot grieve:

- A force (gravity doesn't feel sad)
- Energy (electricity has no emotions)
- An influence (wind doesn't experience sorrow)
- A power (magnetism cannot be hurt)

But you CAN grieve:

- A person
- Someone who loves
- Someone who cares
- Someone in relationship with you

The fact that the Holy Spirit can be grieved proves beyond doubt that He is a divine Person with genuine emotions, not an impersonal force.

2. The Spirit Loves Deeply

Grief only comes from love. You can only be hurt by those you care about. The deeper the love, the deeper the potential grief.

The Spirit's capacity to grieve shows:

- He loves believers intimately
- He cares profoundly about our choices
- He is relationally invested in us
- Our sin doesn't just break His "rules"—it breaks His heart

Think about it: God Himself—the Holy Spirit—can have His heart broken by your sin. That's how personal and intimate His relationship with you is.

3. The Spirit Is Sensitive

The word "grieve" indicates emotional sensitivity. The Spirit:

- Feels deeply
- Responds emotionally to our actions
- Is affected by our behavior
- Can experience pain through relationship with us

This isn't weakness—it's the depth of divine love. God is not cold, distant, or unaffected by His people. He feels, He cares, He grieves.

4. The Spirit Is in Personal Relationship With Believers

You can only grieve someone who:

- Knows you personally
- Is in relationship with you
- Has expectations for you
- Desires good for you
- Is present with you

Paul says believers are "sealed by the Holy Spirit" (Ephesians 1:13, 4:30). This means:

- The Spirit indwells every believer
- He is present constantly
- He observes our lives intimately
- He is bonded to us eternally

This is why our sin grieves Him—He's right there, dwelling within us, witnessing everything we do.

What Grieves the Holy Spirit?

The Context: Ephesians 4:25-32

Paul lists specific sins that grieve the Spirit:

1. Lying (v. 25) - "Therefore, having put away falsehood, let each one of you speak the truth with his neighbor"
2. Sinful Anger (v. 26-27) - "Be angry and do not sin; do not let the sun go down on your anger, and give no opportunity to the devil"
3. Stealing (v. 28) - "Let the thief no longer steal, but rather let him labor"
4. Corrupt Speech (v. 29) - "Let no corrupting talk come out of your mouths, but only such as is good for building up"
5. Bitterness and Malice (v. 31) - "Let all bitterness and wrath and anger and clamor and slander be put away from you, along with all malice"
6. Unforgiveness (v. 32) - In contrast to forgiving "one another, as God in Christ forgave you"

Why These Things Grieve the Spirit

These sins grieve the Holy Spirit because:

They contradict His nature:

- He is truth; lying opposes Him
- He is love; bitterness opposes Him
- He is pure; corrupt speech opposes Him
- He brings unity; divisiveness opposes Him

They damage the body of Christ:

- The Spirit unites believers (Ephesians 4:3)
- These sins create division

- They tear apart what He is building

They oppose His work:

- He is sanctifying you (making you holy)
- Sin resists His transforming work
- It's like fighting against someone who's trying to help you

They dishonor Christ:

- The Spirit glorifies Jesus (John 16:14)
- Our sin misrepresents Christ to the world
- We bear Christ's name; our sin shames Him

The Nature of the Spirit's Grief

Not Like Human Grief

The Spirit's grief is:

1. Holy Grief

- Not sinful sorrow (He cannot sin)
- Not self-pitying disappointment
- But righteous sorrow over evil and its effects

2. Perfect Grief

- He grieves appropriately—neither too much nor too little
- His emotions are always proportionate to reality
- His sorrow is pure, without corruption

3. Loving Grief

- He grieves because He loves you
- A parent grieves when a child goes astray
- His grief comes from desire for your good

4. Patient Grief

- Despite being grieved, He doesn't abandon you
- He remains, convicts, and works to restore
- His grief moves Him to action, not rejection

The Profound Implications

1. Your Sin Has Emotional Impact on God

This is staggering: Your choices affect God emotionally.

When you sin:

- It's not just breaking an abstract law
- It's not just cosmic scorekeeping
- You are causing emotional pain to a Person who loves you infinitely

This should change how you view sin. It's not just "wrong"—it's hurtful to Someone who dwells within you.

2. The Spirit Is Not Impersonal

Many Christians treat the Spirit as:

- A force to be used ("I need more power")
- Energy to tap into ("Fill me with Your Spirit")
- An "it" rather than a "He"

But Ephesians 4:30 demolishes this view. The Spirit:

- Has emotions
- Can be hurt
- Is in personal relationship with you
- Responds to your choices with feeling

You don't "use" the Spirit—you relate to Him.

3. The Spirit Can Be Grieved But Not Lost

Notice what Paul says: "by whom you were sealed for the day of redemption"

Even when mentioning the Spirit's grief, Paul emphasizes security:

- The Spirit seals you (guarantees your salvation)
- This seal is "for the day of redemption" (until Jesus returns)
- Grieving the Spirit doesn't break the seal

You cannot lose your salvation by grieving the Spirit, but you can lose:

- Joy in your relationship with Him
- Power for service
- Intimacy with God
- Effective witness
- Peace in your heart
- The Spirit's manifest presence

4. Love Should Motivate Holiness

The primary motivation for holiness shouldn't be:

- Fear of punishment (though there are consequences)
- Desire for blessings (though obedience brings blessing)
- Religious duty (though obedience is commanded)

The highest motivation is love: "Do not grieve the Holy Spirit."

When you love someone:

- You don't want to hurt them

- Their feelings matter to you
- You care about what affects them
- You adjust your behavior out of love

How much more should this be true of the Holy Spirit who:

- Loved you before you loved Him
- Dwells within you constantly
- Never leaves you
- Intercedes for you
- Transforms you
- Seals you for eternity

Practical Application

How to Avoid Grieving the Spirit

1. Be Aware of His Presence

- Remember: He is always with you
- He sees everything you do
- He hears everything you say
- He knows everything you think

Before you sin, ask: "How will this affect the Spirit dwelling in me?"

2. Listen to His Conviction

- That inner "check" when you're about to sin? That's Him
- The discomfort you feel after sinning? That's Him
- The prompting toward righteousness? That's Him

Don't ignore His voice. He speaks through conscience and Scripture.

3. Confess Quickly

- When you grieve the Spirit, admit it immediately
- Don't let sin linger (Ephesians 4:26 - "don't let the sun go down on your anger")
- 1 John 1:9 - "If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us"

4. Pursue What Pleases Him

- Fill your mind with truth (not lies)
- Fill your heart with love (not bitterness)
- Fill your mouth with edifying words (not corrupt speech)
- Fill your relationships with forgiveness (not grudges)

5. Walk in Step With the Spirit

- Galatians 5:25 - "If we live by the Spirit, let us also keep in step with the Spirit"
- This is relational language—walking together, moving in sync
- Don't run ahead (presumption) or lag behind (disobedience)

The Contrast: Pleasing the Spirit

If we can grieve the Spirit, we can also please Him.

What brings joy to the Spirit?

- Your worship - He delights when you glorify Jesus (John 16:14)
- Your obedience - He rejoices when you walk in truth (3 John 4)
- Your love - He is pleased when you love others (John 13:34-35)
- Your witness - He is glad when you share the gospel (Acts 1:8)
- Your growth - He celebrates your spiritual maturity (2 Peter 3:18)
- Your prayer - He enables and empowers your communion with God (Romans 8:26)
- Your unity - He loves when believers walk in harmony (Ephesians 4:3)

Think about this: Just as you can bring grief to God, you can bring joy to God.

Your choices matter—not just legally, but emotionally to the heart of God.

A Sobering Question

How is your relationship with the Holy Spirit right now?

- Are you grieving Him through persistent sin?
- Are you ignoring His conviction?
- Are you treating Him as an impersonal force rather than a divine Person?
- Are you walking in step with Him, or running ahead in self-will?

He is in you (if you're a believer). He loves you. He's committed to you forever.

Don't break His heart.

Conclusion

Ephesians 4:30 reveals that the Holy Spirit possesses genuine emotion—He can be grieved, He can experience sorrow, He can be hurt by our sin.

This proves:

- He is a Person (only persons have emotions)
- He is relational (only those in relationship can be grieved)
- He is loving (only love produces grief over another's choices)
- He is present (He witnesses our lives intimately)
- He is sensitive (He responds emotionally to our actions)

Your sin doesn't just violate divine law—it wounds divine love.

The next time you're tempted to sin, remember:

- The Holy Spirit lives in you
- He will witness what you do
- He will be grieved by your choice
- He loves you too much to be indifferent

Let love for Him motivate your holiness.

"Do not grieve the Holy Spirit of God, by whom you were sealed for the day of redemption."

Describe the Holy Spirit's attribute of volition as found in 1 Corinthians 12:7, 11; Acts 13:2.

The Holy Spirit's Attribute of Volition (Will)

Introduction

Volition is the capacity to make choices, decisions, and exercise personal will. It is one of the defining characteristics of personhood. The Holy Spirit is not a force that operates mechanically or randomly—He makes sovereign decisions according to His divine will. These passages reveal the Spirit's personal, intentional, purposeful choices.

1 Corinthians 12:7, 11 - The Spirit Distributes Spiritual Gifts According to His Will

The Text (ESV)

Verse 7:

"To each is given the manifestation of the Spirit for the common good."

Verse 11:

"All these are empowered by one and the same Spirit, who apportions to each one individually as he wills."

What This Reveals About the Spirit's Volition

1. The Spirit Makes Individual Decisions

"Who apportions to each one individually"

- The Greek word "apportions" (diairōn) means to divide, distribute, assign
- This is deliberate allocation, not random distribution
- The Spirit doesn't give gifts accidentally or arbitrarily
- He makes specific, intentional decisions about each believer

Each believer receives:

- Different gifts (v. 8-10: wisdom, knowledge, faith, healing, miracles, prophecy, discernment, tongues, interpretation)
- Customized according to the Spirit's choice
- Perfectly suited for their role in the body

This requires:

- Knowledge - understanding each person's design and calling
- Wisdom - knowing which gifts fit which people
- Intentionality - purposeful distribution, not chance

2. The Spirit Acts "As He Wills"

"As he wills" (Greek: kathos bouletai)

This phrase is critical:

- "Bouletai" comes from boulomai, meaning "to will, to desire, to purpose, to determine"
- It refers to deliberate choice based on preference and purpose
- This is sovereign decision-making

What this means:

- The Spirit doesn't consult us about which gifts we receive
- He doesn't distribute based on our preferences or requests
- He doesn't assign gifts democratically or equally
- He decides according to His own sovereign will

This is divine prerogative—an attribute only God possesses.

3. The Spirit's Will Is Purposeful

"For the common good" (v. 7)

The Spirit's choices aren't arbitrary or capricious:

- Every gift He gives has purpose
- Every distribution serves the body of Christ
- Every decision promotes God's glory

His will is:

- Wise - perfectly suited to accomplish His purposes
- Good - always for the benefit of the church
- Sovereign - not subject to human manipulation or control

4. The Spirit's Will Is Diverse Yet Unified

"All these are empowered by one and the same Spirit" (v. 11)

- Multiple different gifts (diversity)
- All from one Spirit (unity)
- Different manifestations, same divine source

This shows the Spirit's will is:

- Creative - producing variety and diversity
- Unified - all working toward one purpose
- Coordinated - orchestrating different gifts into harmony

Only a personal, intelligent being can coordinate such complexity.

The Implications

If the Spirit distributes gifts "as He wills," then:

1. You cannot demand or claim certain gifts - It's not your choice; it's His
2. You cannot judge others for their gifts - The Spirit gave what He chose
3. You should steward faithfully what you've received - He gave it intentionally to you
4. You should trust His wisdom - His distribution is perfect
5. You must recognize His sovereignty - He is God, making divine decisions

Question to consider: Are you trying to exercise gifts the Spirit hasn't given you? Or are you faithfully using the gifts He has willed for you?

Acts 13:2 - The Spirit Makes Ministry Assignments

The Text (ESV)

"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.'"

What This Reveals About the Spirit's Volition

1. The Spirit Speaks Personally

"The Holy Spirit said"

- This isn't passive influence or vague impression
- This is direct, personal communication
- The Spirit uses language: "Set apart for me"
- He refers to Himself in the first person

Only a person can "say" something. Forces don't speak. Energy doesn't communicate. Powers don't use first-person pronouns.

The Spirit speaks because He is a Person with thoughts to express and will to communicate.

2. The Spirit Makes Specific Choices

"Set apart for me Barnabas and Saul"

The Spirit didn't say:

- "Send some missionaries" (general)
- "Whoever wants to go" (democratic)
- "Let the church decide" (delegated)

He said: "Barnabas and Saul" (specific)

This shows:

- Selective choice - He picked these two, not others
- Personal knowledge - He knew who was suited for the task
- Deliberate decision - This was intentional selection

The Spirit exercises discriminating judgment—choosing specific people for specific tasks.

3. The Spirit Has His Own Purposes

"For the work to which I have called them"

Notice:

- "I have called" - The Spirit claims authorship of the call
- "The work" - He has a specific mission in mind
- "To which" - Purposeful assignment to a particular task

This reveals:

- The Spirit has goals and objectives
- He plans specific missions
- He assigns particular people to particular work
- He exercises divine sovereignty over ministry

This is volition in action:

- He conceived the plan
- He chose the people
- He initiated the call
- He directed the church to act

4. The Spirit Expects Obedience

"Set apart for me"

This is a command, not a suggestion:

- The Spirit expects His will to be done
- He gives directives with authority
- The church must respond in obedience

This shows:

- The Spirit has authority to command
- His will is binding on the church
- He expects compliance with His decisions

Only a person with authority can command. Only God can command with absolute authority.

The Spirit does both—proving He is a divine Person.

5. The Spirit Initiates Mission

The church wasn't planning this mission trip. The Spirit initiated it:

- They were worshiping and fasting
- The Spirit interrupted with His directive
- He set the agenda for the church's mission

This reveals:

- The Spirit has initiative - He acts first
- He has priorities - He knows what needs to happen
- He has timing - He chose this moment to speak
- He has strategy - He planned the first missionary journey

All of these require personal volition—the ability to choose, plan, and act.

The Result: The First Missionary Journey

Acts 13:3-4:

"Then after fasting and praying they laid their hands on them and sent them off. So, being sent out by the Holy Spirit, they went down to Seleucia..."

Notice: They were "sent out by the Holy Spirit"

This wasn't:

- The church's idea (though they participated)
- Paul and Barnabas's idea (though they went)
- Human strategy (though they planned the route)

It was the Spirit's sovereign choice and initiative.

The entire missionary movement that changed the world began with the Holy Spirit's volitional decision to call and send specific men for specific work.

Summary: The Holy Spirit's Volition Revealed

From These Passages We Learn:

The Spirit Possesses Will Because He:

1. Makes sovereign decisions - "as He wills" (1 Cor 12:11)
2. Distributes gifts individually - customized for each believer (1 Cor 12:7, 11)
3. Chooses specific people - Barnabas and Saul (Acts 13:2)
4. Assigns specific tasks - "the work to which I have called them" (Acts 13:2)
5. Speaks commands - "Set apart for me" (Acts 13:2)
6. Initiates action - He starts the missionary movement (Acts 13:2-4)
7. Acts purposefully - "for the common good" (1 Cor 12:7)

Theological Implications

1. The Spirit Is a Person, Not a Force

Impersonal forces don't have volition:

- Gravity doesn't "will" objects to fall
- Wind doesn't "choose" which direction to blow
- Electricity doesn't "decide" where to flow

But persons do exercise will:

- They make choices
- They have preferences

- They act with intention
- They pursue purposes

The Holy Spirit does all these things—proving He is a divine Person.

2. The Spirit Is Fully God

Only God possesses sovereign will:

- Angels have will, but it's subordinate to God
- Humans have will, but it's limited and finite
- Satan has will, but it's rebellious and confined

Only God has:

- Absolute sovereignty - His will is supreme
- Perfect wisdom - His choices are always right
- Ultimate authority - His decisions are final
- Creative power - He accomplishes what He wills

The Spirit exercises all these attributes—proving He is fully divine.

3. The Spirit Is Sovereign Over the Church

The Spirit, not the church, determines:

- Who receives which spiritual gifts
- Who is called to which ministry
- When and where mission work begins
- How the body of Christ functions

This means:

- Church leadership must seek the Spirit's direction
- Believers must submit to the Spirit's assignments
- Ministry strategy must align with the Spirit's will
- The church exists to fulfill the Spirit's purposes

We don't "use" the Spirit—we submit to Him.

4. You Cannot Manipulate the Spirit

Some treat the Spirit as:

- A vending machine (put in prayer, get out gifts)
- A tool to be wielded (according to human agenda)
- A resource to be tapped (for personal benefit)

But these passages destroy such thinking:

- You cannot force the Spirit to give you certain gifts—He decides
- You cannot manipulate the Spirit to bless your plans—He initiates
- You cannot control the Spirit's work—He acts according to His will

The Spirit is sovereign. You must submit to His choices, not expect Him to submit to yours.

Practical Applications

1. Discover and Use Your Spiritual Gifts

Since the Spirit has given you specific gifts:

- Ask Him to reveal what they are
- Don't covet gifts He hasn't given you
- Don't neglect gifts He has given you
- Use your gifts "for the common good"

1 Peter 4:10 - "As each has received a gift, use it to serve one another, as good stewards of God's varied grace."

Your gifts aren't about you—they're about the Spirit's purpose for the body.

2. Seek the Spirit's Direction for Ministry

Since the Spirit calls and sends workers:

- Don't assume you should do certain ministry just because it's needed
- Don't pursue ministry based solely on your desires
- Don't make ministry decisions based only on opportunity

Instead:

- Wait on the Spirit's clear direction (like the church in Acts 13:2)
- Pray for His specific guidance
- Expect Him to speak (through Scripture, godly counsel, circumstances, inner conviction)
- Obey when He calls, even if it's unexpected

Question: Are you serving where the Spirit has called you, or where you've chosen?

3. Submit to the Spirit's Sovereign Choices

Since the Spirit apportions "as He wills:"

- Don't be jealous of others' gifts
- Don't despise your own gifts as "lesser"

- Don't compare your ministry to others'
- Trust the Spirit's wisdom in His distribution

Romans 9:20 - "Who are you, O man, to answer back to God?"

If the Spirit willed to give you teaching, don't wish for prophecy. If He gave you mercy, don't despise it by wanting leadership. He chose perfectly.

4. Expect the Spirit to Speak

Since the Spirit said "Set apart for me Barnabas and Saul:"

- The Spirit still speaks to His church today
- He still calls people to specific work
- He still directs ministry and mission

How does He speak?

- Through Scripture (primarily and authoritatively)
- Through godly leaders
- Through circumstances
- Through inner conviction aligned with Scripture
- Through the counsel of mature believers

Create space to hear Him:

- Worship and fasting (Acts 13:2)
- Prayer and Scripture reading
- Silence before God
- Submission to His voice

5. Coordinate With the Body

Since the Spirit gives diverse gifts "for the common good:"

- Your gift is incomplete without others'
- You need what others have
- Others need what you have
- Together, you accomplish the Spirit's purposes

Don't operate independently:

- Stay connected to a local church
- Work in coordination with other believers
- Recognize your limitations
- Celebrate others' contributions

1 Corinthians 12:12 - "For just as the body is one and has many members, and all the members of the body, though many, are one body, so it is with Christ."

A Challenging Question

Are you submitted to the Holy Spirit's will, or trying to bend Him to yours?

Consider:

- Are you serving in the ministry He called you to?
- Are you using the gifts He gave you?
- Are you pursuing His agenda or yours?
- Are you listening for His direction?
- Are you obeying His commands?

The Spirit has a will. The question is: will you align yours with His?

Conclusion

The Holy Spirit possesses volition—personal, sovereign, divine will.

He is not:

- A force you control
- Energy you tap into
- Power you wield
- A resource you use

He is:

- A Person who makes choices
- God who exercises sovereignty
- The One who determines spiritual gifts
- The One who calls and sends workers
- The One who directs the church's mission

Your response should be:

- Submission to His will
- Obedience to His calls
- Faithfulness with His gifts
- Coordination with His body
- Worship of His sovereignty

1 Corinthians 12:11 - "All these are empowered by one and the same Spirit, who apportions to each one individually as he wills."

He wills. He chooses. He decides.

Will you submit?

The Holy Spirit is God

Write the key statement that the Holy Spirit is God from 2 Corinthians 3:17.

The key statement from 2 Corinthians 3:17 is:

"Now the Lord is the Spirit"

This verse directly identifies the Lord with the Spirit, which many theologians interpret as an affirmation of the deity of the Holy Spirit. The full verse reads: "Now the Lord is the Spirit, and where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is freedom."

In this context, Paul is discussing the new covenant and contrasting it with the old covenant. The identification of "the Lord" (often understood as referring to Yahweh/God) with "the Spirit" is seen as a significant theological statement about the divine nature of the Holy Spirit, particularly within Trinitarian theology.

What does Acts 5:3-4 instruct about lying to the Holy Spirit?

Acts 5:3-4 provides a powerful statement about the nature of the Holy Spirit through the account of Ananias and Sapphira. The key instruction is:

Lying to the Holy Spirit is lying to God.

In these verses, Peter confronts Ananias:

- Verse 3: "Ananias, why has Satan filled your heart to lie to the Holy Spirit...?"
- Verse 4: "You have not lied to man but to God."

This passage equates lying to the Holy Spirit with lying to God Himself, which is significant for several reasons:

1. The Holy Spirit is a person - He can be lied to, which indicates personhood rather than being merely an impersonal force
2. The Holy Spirit is divine - The direct equation between lying to the Holy Spirit (v. 3) and lying to God (v. 4) affirms the deity of the Holy Spirit
3. The seriousness of the offense - This shows that the Holy Spirit deserves the same reverence and truthfulness as God the Father

This passage is often cited as one of the clearest biblical affirmations of the Holy Spirit's deity and distinct personhood within the Trinity.

The Work of the Holy Spirit.

Describe the activity of the Holy Spirit from Psalm 104:30.

Psalm 104:30 describes a creative and life-giving activity of the Holy Spirit:

"When you send your Spirit, they are created, and you renew the face of the ground."

This verse highlights several key aspects of the Holy Spirit's work:

1. Creative Power - The Spirit is involved in the creation of life. The phrase "they are created" indicates the Holy Spirit's role in bringing living creatures into existence.
2. Renewal and Restoration - The Spirit "renews the face of the ground," suggesting ongoing sustaining and regenerating work in creation, not just an initial act of creation.
3. Divine Agent - The Spirit is presented as God's active agent in the world, carrying out God's creative purposes.

Context: Psalm 104 is a creation psalm that praises God for His majesty and creative works. Verses 29-30 contrast what happens when God withdraws His breath/spirit (creatures die and return to dust) with what happens when He sends His Spirit (new life is created and the earth is renewed).

This verse connects to Genesis 1:2 where "the Spirit of God was hovering over the waters" at creation, and shows the Holy Spirit's ongoing role in sustaining and renewing all of creation. It emphasizes that the Spirit is the life-giver and sustainer of all living things.

Describe the Holy Spirit's continued activities from 2 Peter 1:20-21.

2 Peter 1:20-21 describes the Holy Spirit's activity in divine inspiration and the production of Scripture:

"No prophecy of Scripture comes from someone's own interpretation. For no prophecy was ever produced by the will of man, but men spoke from God as they were carried along by the Holy Spirit."

This passage highlights several key aspects of the Holy Spirit's work:

1. Divine Origin of Scripture - Prophecy and Scripture did not originate from human initiative or interpretation ("not produced by the will of man"), but from God Himself.
2. Active Guidance and Control - The phrase "carried along by the Holy Spirit" uses a nautical metaphor suggesting that the Spirit guided and directed the human authors like wind moves a ship. The human writers were not passive, but were actively moved and directed by the Spirit.
3. Inspiration of Human Authors - "Men spoke from God" - the Holy Spirit worked through human personalities, vocabularies, and experiences while ensuring the message was truly God's Word.

4. Authoritative Truth - Because Scripture comes through the Holy Spirit's agency, it carries divine authority and reliability.

Key Point: This passage establishes the Holy Spirit as the divine agent behind the writing of Scripture, ensuring that what was written was not merely human opinion or wisdom, but God's revelation to humanity. This is the foundation for the doctrine of biblical inspiration and the trustworthiness of Scripture.

What special work does the Holy Spirit perform according to John 16:7-8?

According to John 16:7-8, the Holy Spirit performs the special work of conviction:

"Nevertheless, I tell you the truth: it is to your advantage that I go away, for if I do not go away, the Helper will not come to you. But if I go, I will send him to you. And when he comes, he will convict the world concerning sin and righteousness and judgment."

This passage highlights several key aspects of the Holy Spirit's special work:

1. The Spirit as "Helper" (Paraclete) - Jesus identifies the Holy Spirit as the Helper or Comforter who will come after His departure, indicating the Spirit's supportive and advocacy role.
2. Conviction of Sin - The Holy Spirit convicts the world of sin, particularly unbelief in Jesus (v. 9 elaborates: "because they do not believe in me").
3. Conviction of Righteousness - The Spirit convicts concerning righteousness, showing what true righteousness is through Jesus (v. 10: "because I go to the Father").
4. Conviction of Judgment - The Spirit convicts regarding judgment, demonstrating that Satan has been judged and defeated (v. 11: "because the ruler of this world is judged").

Significance: This convicting work is essential for salvation and spiritual awareness. The Holy Spirit opens people's eyes to their spiritual condition, the truth about Christ, and the reality of God's judgment. Without this work of the Spirit, people remain spiritually blind to their need for salvation.

By whom are sinners born into God's kingdom according to John 3:5-8?

According to John 3:5-8, sinners are born into God's kingdom by the Holy Spirit:

"Jesus answered, 'Truly, truly, I say to you, unless one is born of water and the Spirit, he cannot enter the kingdom of God. That which is born of the flesh is flesh, and that

which is born of the Spirit is spirit. Do not marvel that I said to you, 'You must be born again.' The wind blows where it wishes, and you hear its sound, but you do not know where it comes from or where it goes. So it is with everyone who is born of the Spirit.'"

This passage emphasizes several key truths about the Holy Spirit's work in regeneration:

1. Necessity of Spiritual Birth - Entering God's kingdom requires being "born of the Spirit," not just physical birth ("born of flesh").
2. The Spirit as the Agent - The Holy Spirit is the divine agent who brings about this new birth or regeneration in a person's life.
3. Supernatural Work - Jesus uses the wind analogy to show that the Spirit's work is mysterious, sovereign, and beyond human control or complete understanding—we see the effects but cannot control or fully comprehend the process.
4. Absolute Requirement - The phrase "unless one is born of...the Spirit" indicates this is not optional but essential for salvation and entering God's kingdom.

Summary: The Holy Spirit is the one who regenerates sinners, giving them new spiritual life and enabling them to enter God's kingdom. This is entirely a work of God, not human effort.

According to Titus 3:5-6 and 1 Corinthians 12:13, what does the Holy Spirit do when a person is saved?

According to Titus 3:5-6 and 1 Corinthians 12:13, the Holy Spirit performs several crucial works when a person is saved:

Titus 3:5-6: Regeneration and Renewal

"He saved us, not because of works done by us in righteousness, but according to his mercy, by the washing of regeneration and renewal of the Holy Spirit, whom he poured out on us richly through Jesus Christ our Savior."

The Holy Spirit:

1. Regenerates - Brings about spiritual rebirth ("washing of regeneration")
2. Renews - Creates inward spiritual renewal and transformation
3. Is poured out richly - God lavishly gives the Spirit to believers through Christ

1 Corinthians 12:13: Baptism into the Body of Christ

"For in one Spirit we were all baptized into one body—Jews or Greeks, slaves or free—and all were made to drink of one Spirit."

The Holy Spirit:

1. Baptizes believers into Christ's body - Unites all believers into one spiritual body, the Church
2. Unifies believers - Transcends all human distinctions (ethnicity, social status) by incorporating all believers into one body
3. Indwells believers - All are "made to drink of one Spirit," indicating the Spirit's presence within

Summary

At salvation, the Holy Spirit regenerates the person (giving new spiritual life), renews them inwardly, and baptizes them into the body of Christ (the Church), making them part of God's family and indwelling them permanently.

How does the Holy Spirit guarantee a believer's salvation according to Ephesians 1:13-14?

According to Ephesians 1:13-14, the Holy Spirit guarantees a believer's salvation by serving as a seal and a guarantee (deposit):

"In him you also, when you heard the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation, and believed in him, were sealed with the promised Holy Spirit, who is the guarantee of our inheritance until we acquire possession of it, to the praise of his glory."

This passage reveals several ways the Holy Spirit secures salvation:

1. The Spirit as a Seal

- Believers are "sealed with the promised Holy Spirit" at the moment of faith
- A seal indicates:
 - Ownership - God has claimed the believer as His own
 - Security - The seal protects and secures what belongs to God
 - Authenticity - The Spirit's presence marks genuine believers

2. The Spirit as a Guarantee (Deposit/Down Payment)

- The Greek word (arrabon) means a first installment or down payment that guarantees the full payment will come
- The Holy Spirit is God's guarantee that He will complete what He started
- The Spirit's present work is a foretaste of the full inheritance to come

3. Until Full Possession

- The Spirit remains as this guarantee "until we acquire possession of it"

- This refers to the complete redemption and glorification believers will receive in eternity

Summary: The Holy Spirit Himself is God's guarantee that believers will receive their full inheritance. His indwelling presence is both proof of ownership and an unbreakable promise of future complete salvation.

The Ministry of the Holy Spirit in the Believer's Life.

What is the relationship between the Holy Spirit and the believer according to Romans 8:9?

According to Romans 8:9, the relationship between the Holy Spirit and the believer is one of indwelling:

"You, however, are not in the flesh but in the Spirit, if in fact the Spirit of God dwells in you. Anyone who does not have the Spirit of Christ does not belong to him."

This verse reveals several crucial aspects of this relationship:

1. The Spirit Dwells Within Believers

- The Holy Spirit literally lives inside every true believer
- This indwelling changes the believer's fundamental nature from being "in the flesh" to being "in the Spirit"

2. The Spirit's Presence is Universal Among Believers

- Every genuine Christian has the Holy Spirit dwelling within them
- This is not reserved for a special class of believers but is true of all who belong to Christ

3. The Spirit's Presence is Essential

- "Anyone who does not have the Spirit of Christ does not belong to him"
- Having the Holy Spirit is the defining mark of a true believer
- Without the Spirit's indwelling, a person is not truly saved

4. Identity Markers

- The Spirit is called both "the Spirit of God" and "the Spirit of Christ," showing the Trinity's unity
- The Spirit connects believers to both the Father and the Son

Summary: The Holy Spirit dwells permanently within every believer, and His indwelling presence is the essential mark that distinguishes true Christians from non-Christians. If someone belongs to Christ, they have the Spirit; if they don't have the Spirit, they don't belong to Christ.

What is another ministry of the Holy Spirit in the life of the believer according to 1st Corinthians 2 verses 12 through 13?

According to 1 Corinthians 2:12-13, another ministry of the Holy Spirit in the believer's life is teaching and revealing spiritual truth:

"Now we have received not the spirit of the world, but the Spirit who is from God, that we might understand the things freely given us by God. And we impart this in words not taught by human wisdom but taught by the Spirit, interpreting spiritual truths to those who are spiritual."

This passage highlights several key aspects of the Spirit's teaching ministry:

1. Spiritual Understanding

- The Holy Spirit enables believers to understand "the things freely given us by God"
- Without the Spirit, spiritual truths remain incomprehensible to the natural mind

2. Divine Revelation

- The Spirit reveals God's wisdom and purposes that would otherwise be hidden
- This contrasts with "the spirit of the world" which cannot grasp spiritual realities

3. Teaching Ministry

- The Spirit teaches believers, not through "human wisdom" but through divine instruction
- The Spirit provides the words and concepts to communicate spiritual truth

4. Interpreting Spiritual Truths

- The Spirit helps believers interpret and explain spiritual matters to other spiritual people
- He enables Spirit-filled believers to communicate God's truth effectively

Summary: The Holy Spirit illuminates the minds of believers to understand God's truth, teaches them spiritual wisdom, and enables them to communicate these truths to others. This teaching ministry is essential for spiritual growth and understanding Scripture and God's will.

What exhortations are given to all believers in regard to the Spirit according to Ephesians 4:30, 1 Thessalonians 5 verse 19, and Ephesians 5 verse 18?

These three passages give important exhortations to believers regarding their relationship with the Holy Spirit:

1. Ephesians 4:30 - Do Not Grieve the Holy Spirit

"And do not grieve the Holy Spirit of God, by whom you were sealed for the day of redemption."

- Believers can cause sorrow to the Holy Spirit through sin, particularly sins mentioned in context (bitterness, anger, slander, malice)
- This shows the Spirit is a person with emotions who can be grieved
- The exhortation calls for holy living that honors the Spirit's presence

2. 1 Thessalonians 5:19 - Do Not Quench the Spirit

"Do not quench the Spirit."

- "Quench" means to extinguish or suppress, like putting out a fire
- Believers can suppress or resist the Spirit's work and leading in their lives
- This may refer to ignoring the Spirit's promptings, rejecting His guidance, or hindering His work in the church
- The command calls for responsiveness and yielding to the Spirit's work

3. Ephesians 5:18 - Be Filled with the Spirit

"And do not get drunk with wine, for that is debauchery, but be filled with the Spirit."

- This is a command, not a suggestion - believers are to continuously be filled with the Spirit
- The Greek tense indicates an ongoing, repeated filling
- Being Spirit-filled means being under His control and influence (contrasted with being controlled by alcohol)
- This results in worship, thankfulness, and mutual submission (vv. 19-21)

Summary: Believers are commanded to not grieve the Spirit through sin, not quench the Spirit by resisting His work, and to be filled with the Spirit by yielding to His control. These exhortations call for sensitivity, responsiveness, and surrender to the Holy Spirit's presence and work in the believer's life.

How does a Christian keep from sinning according to Galatians 5 verse 16?

According to Galatians 5:16, a Christian keeps from sinning by walking by the Spirit:

"But I say, walk by the Spirit, and you will not gratify the desires of the flesh."

This verse reveals the key principle for victory over sin:

1. Walk by the Spirit

- "Walk" implies continuous, moment-by-moment living in dependence on and obedience to the Holy Spirit

- It's an active, ongoing lifestyle choice, not a one-time decision
- This means being led by, responsive to, and empowered by the Spirit daily

2. The Promise of Victory

- "You will not gratify the desires of the flesh"
- This is a promise, not just advice - walking by the Spirit results in not fulfilling sinful desires
- The Spirit provides the power to resist and overcome temptation

3. The Alternative to Self-Effort

- Victory over sin doesn't come through willpower or human effort alone
- It comes through dependence on and submission to the Holy Spirit's power and guidance

4. The Conflict (context)

- Galatians 5:17 explains there's a constant battle between the flesh and the Spirit
- Walking by the Spirit is the solution to this conflict

Summary: A Christian keeps from sinning by walking in daily dependence on and obedience to the Holy Spirit. The Spirit provides the power and guidance necessary to overcome sinful desires that believers cannot conquer in their own strength.

When a believer is filled with the Holy Spirit, he will exhibit the fruit of the Spirit. List those qualities from Galatians chapter 5, verses 22 through 23.

According to Galatians 5:22-23, the fruit of the Spirit consists of nine qualities:

"But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, self-control; against such things there is no law."

The Nine Qualities of the Fruit of the Spirit:

1. Love - Selfless, sacrificial love for God and others
2. Joy - Deep gladness and delight that transcends circumstances
3. Peace - Inner tranquility and harmony with God and others
4. Patience - Long-suffering and endurance in difficult situations
5. Kindness - Tender concern and goodness toward others
6. Goodness - Moral excellence and uprightness of character

7. Faithfulness - Loyalty, reliability, and trustworthiness

8. Gentleness - Meekness, humility, and considerate strength

9. Self-control - Discipline and mastery over one's desires and impulses

Important Notes:

- Notice it's "fruit" (singular), not "fruits" - these qualities are a unified package that the Spirit produces
- These are not achieved through human effort but are the natural result of the Spirit's work in a believer's life
- "Against such things there is no law" - no law opposes these virtues; they fulfill God's moral requirements

Summary: When filled with the Holy Spirit, believers will exhibit these Christlike character qualities as evidence of the Spirit's transforming work within them.

Write a short narrative about how those qualities can be exhibited in a modern Christian's life.

Living Out the Fruit of the Spirit

Sarah's alarm went off at 5:30 AM, jarring her from a restless sleep. Her teenage daughter had come home past curfew again last night, and they'd argued. As she lay there rehearsing angry words in her mind, she felt the gentle prompting of the Holy Spirit. She paused, prayed, and asked God for His love and patience to replace her frustration.

At breakfast, instead of another lecture, Sarah spoke gently to her daughter about trust and boundaries, showing gentleness even while maintaining firm expectations. The conversation didn't go perfectly, but she sensed God's peacesettling over her anxious heart.

At work, her co-worker Mark was taking credit for her ideas again in the team meeting. Sarah felt anger rising, but instead of lashing out, she chose self-control. After the meeting, she approached him privately with kindness, explaining how his actions affected her. His defensive response didn't shake her resolve to respond with goodness rather than retaliation.

During lunch, Sarah's friend Jessica called in tears. Her marriage was falling apart. Though Sarah had her own deadline pressures, she demonstrated faithfulness by keeping her promise to be there for Jessica. She listened, prayed with her, and spoke words of hope, allowing God's joy to encourage her hurting friend even in dark circumstances.

That evening, stuck in traffic after a long day, Sarah could have given in to road rage. Instead, she turned on

worship music and thanked God for His presence. The fruit of the Spirit wasn't making her life problem-free, but it was transforming how she responded to life's challenges—one Spirit-led moment at a time.

As she finally pulled into her driveway, she smiled, remembering Galatians 5:22-23. These qualities weren't something she manufactured through willpower; they were the Holy Spirit living through her, making her more like Jesus in the midst of ordinary, messy, beautiful life.

What significance does 1st Corinthians 6 verses 19 through 20 have for the modern Christian?

1 Corinthians 6:19-20 has profound significance for the modern Christian:

"Or do you not know that your body is a temple of the Holy Spirit within you, whom you have from God? You are not your own, for you were bought with a price. So glorify God in your body."

This passage carries several powerful truths relevant to today's believer:

1. The Body as God's Temple

- The Holy Spirit dwells within the believer's physical body
- This elevates the body from mere flesh to sacred space
- Just as the temple in the Old Testament was holy and set apart for God, so is the Christian's body

2. You Are Not Your Own

- Modern culture emphasizes personal autonomy: "It's my body, my choice, my life"
- Scripture declares believers belong to God, not to themselves
- This challenges the individualistic mindset prevalent today

3. Bought with a Price

- Christians were purchased by Christ's blood on the cross
- This implies both ownership and infinite value
- We are accountable to the One who redeemed us

4. Glorify God in Your Body

- This is the practical application: honor God through physical choices
- Sexual purity - The immediate context (vv. 12-18) addresses sexual immorality, making this highly relevant in today's sexually permissive culture

- Health and stewardship - How we care for our bodies (eating, exercise, rest, avoiding harmful substances)
- What we do with our bodies - Our actions, where we go, what we participate in

Modern Applications:

Sexual Ethics

In an age of casual hookup culture, pornography, and shifting sexual norms, this passage calls Christians to honor God through sexual purity and faithfulness.

Physical Health

This provides motivation for healthy living—not for vanity, but because our bodies belong to God and house His Spirit.

Substance Use

Decisions about alcohol, drugs, or other substances should consider whether they honor the temple of the Holy Spirit.

Technology and Media

What we view online, the entertainment we consume, and how we use technology all impact the temple where God dwells.

Self-Harm and Body Image

This passage affirms the sacred value of our bodies, speaking against both self-destructive behaviors and obsessive focus on appearance.

The Counter-Cultural Message:

In a world that says "your body, your rules," Scripture says "your body is God's temple." This doesn't diminish human dignity—it actually elevates it. We matter so much that God Himself chooses to dwell within us.

Summary: This passage reminds modern Christians that their bodies are not their own to use as they please, but are sacred temples housing the Holy Spirit. Every physical choice—sexual, health-related, or otherwise—should reflect the reality that we belong to God and exist to bring Him glory through our bodies.

What specific ways can an individual Christian glorify God in their bodies?

Based on 1 Corinthians 6:19-20 and broader biblical principles, here are specific ways an individual Christian can glorify God in their body:

Sexual Purity

- Maintain sexual abstinence before marriage and faithfulness within marriage
- Flee from sexual immorality including pornography, lustful thoughts, and compromising situations

- Guard your eyes and mind by being careful about entertainment, social media, and online content
- Dress modestly in ways that honor God and respect others
- Treat the opposite sex with purity and appropriate boundaries

Physical Health and Stewardship

- Eat nutritiously to fuel your body properly, viewing food as provision from God rather than just pleasure
- Exercise regularly to maintain strength and energy for serving God
- Get adequate rest recognizing that God designed our bodies to need sleep
- Avoid harmful substances like illegal drugs, tobacco, and excessive alcohol
- Seek medical care when needed, stewarding the body God has given you

Using Your Body for Service

- Use your hands to serve others—helping the needy, caring for the sick, working honestly
- Use your feet to go where God calls you—visiting the lonely, sharing the gospel, attending church
- Use your voice to speak words of encouragement, teach truth, sing praise to God
- Use your skills and abilities to build up the church and bless others

Speech and Communication

- Speak truthfully and avoid lies, gossip, and slander
- Encourage others with your words rather than tearing them down
- Control your tongue by avoiding profanity, crude jokes, and unwholesome talk
- Use your words to share the gospel and point others to Christ

Worship and Spiritual Disciplines

- Kneel or bow in prayer, using physical posture to express reverence
- Lift your hands in worship if led by the Spirit
- Present your body as a living sacrifice (Romans 12:1) in daily surrender to God

- Fast occasionally to focus on spiritual priorities over physical appetites

Work and Daily Activities

- Work diligently as unto the Lord, not just for human employers
- Use your talents and abilities for God's kingdom purposes
- Engage in honest labor that contributes to society and provides for your needs
- Avoid laziness while also avoiding workaholicism that neglects spiritual priorities

Relationships and Social Life

- Show affection appropriately through hugs, handshakes, and appropriate physical touch that builds up
- Practice hospitality by using your home and resources to bless others
- Be present with people rather than constantly distracted by devices
- Demonstrate Christ's love through acts of physical service and sacrifice

Mental and Emotional Health

- Guard your thought life taking thoughts captive to Christ (2 Corinthians 10:5)
- Seek help for mental health struggles rather than suffering in silence
- Practice gratitude for the body God has given you, avoiding comparison and discontentment
- Reject body shame while also refusing to indulge vanity or obsession with appearance

What to Avoid

- Sexual sin of any kind
- Gluttony and food addictions
- Substance abuse or dependence
- Self-harm or suicidal thoughts/actions (seek help immediately)
- Reckless behavior that unnecessarily endangers your life
- Excessive body modification motivated by rebellion rather than stewardship
- Slothfulness and neglect of basic care

The Motivating Principle

All of these practices flow from understanding that:

- Your body belongs to God, not to you

- The Holy Spirit lives within you
- Christ purchased you at the cost of His own blood
- Your physical life is an opportunity to bring glory to God

The Goal: Every physical choice—what you eat, how you move, where you go, what you do, who you touch, what you say—can be an act of worship when done consciously to honor the God who dwells within you.

As Paul wrote in 1 Corinthians 10:31: "So, whether you eat or drink, or whatever you do, do all to the glory of God."