

32 Names of the Holy Spirit and Their Meanings

NAMES *of* THE HOLY SPIRIT

32 Names of the Holy Spirit



The Meaning of Each Name



Bible References



**Meditate on the Holy Spirit's
Characteristics**

ROSE
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The HOLY SPIRIT

Much controversy and confusion exists in understanding who the Holy Spirit is and what he does.

- Many consider the Spirit to be impersonal, rather like a force—the energy or power of God. The Scriptures confirm the powerful nature of the Holy Spirit. He is named the Power of God and Spirit of Might, and yet the Bible tells us much more about him. Unlike a mere force, he can be lied to (Acts 5:3–4), he can be grieved (Ephesians 4:30), he has a name (Matthew 28:19).
- Other people see the Spirit as the common bond of love among God’s people. The Scriptures call him the Spirit of grace, of mercy and of comfort; but he is also called the Spirit of truth and judgment (discernment), indicating that he is more than simply a warm fuzzy feeling we get when we are together.
- Some understand the Holy Spirit as the mind, the intellect, behind creation. To be sure, he is the Spirit of wisdom and understanding, but more than a cosmic computer. He is in fact God, the third Person of the Trinity.

Studying the names of the Spirit found in the Bible will help us get a fuller, well-rounded idea of who he is and how he operates and so allow us to worship and serve God in a fuller and richer capacity.

The TRINITY

In the simplest of terms, Christians believe that there is only one God, and this one God exists as one essence in three Persons—the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit.



Why do Christians Believe in the Trinity?

- The Bible clearly teaches that there is only one God, yet it calls all three Persons God.
- There is only one God (Deuteronomy 6:4; Isaiah 44:6, 8; 45:5a).
- The Father is God (1 Corinthians 8:6; Ephesians 4:4–6).
- The Son is God (John 1:1–5, 14; John 10:30–33; John 20:28; Hebrews 1:6–8; Philippians 2:9–11; see these passages about Jesus’ deity: Isaiah 7:14; Isaiah 9:6; John 1:1; John 1:18; John 8:58, 59; John 10:30; Acts 20:28; Romans 9:5; 10:9–13; Colossians 1:15, 16; Colossians 2:9; Titus 2:13; Hebrews 1:3, 8; 2 Peter 1:1; 1 John 5:20).
- The Holy Spirit is God (Acts 5:3, 4; 2 Corinthians 3:17; Exodus 34:34; 2 Corinthians 3:16).

Name	References	Meaning
BREATH OF THE ALMIGHTY	Job 33:4	The Holy Spirit is the life-giving breath of God.
COUNSELOR COMFORTER	John 14:16, 26; 15:26; Romans 8:26	The Holy Spirit comforts, counsels and gives strength.
SPIRIT OF COUNSEL	Isaiah 11:2	The Holy Spirit counsels and teaches us as we grow in Christ.
ETERNAL SPIRIT	Hebrews 9:14	The Holy Spirit is eternal God.
FREE SPIRIT	Psalms 51:12	The Holy Spirit is God's generous and willing spirit.
GOD	Acts 5:3–4	The Holy Spirit is the Third Person of the Trinity. He is God.
GOOD SPIRIT	Nehemiah 9:20; Psalm 143:10	God's Good Spirit will teach and lead us in all that is good.
HOLY SPIRIT	Psalms 51:11; Luke 11:13; Ephesians 1:13; 4:30	God is Spirit and that Spirit is holy. He is the Spirit of holiness.
LORD	2 Cor. 3:16–17	Like Jesus and the Father, the Holy Spirit is also addressed and worshiped as Lord.
POWER OF THE HIGHEST	Luke 1:35	The Spirit is God's power, the greatest power there is.
SPIRIT OF MIGHT	Isaiah 11:2	The Holy Spirit is the Spirit of Strength.
SPIRIT OF ADOPTION	Romans 8:15	He is the Spirit by which we are made God's children.
SPIRIT OF BURNING	Isaiah 4:4	The Spirit is God's fire of purification.
SPIRIT OF JUDGMENT	Isaiah 4:4; 28:6	The Spirit of God brings conviction and judgment.
SPIRIT OF CHRIST (JESUS CHRIST)	Romans 8:9; 1 Peter 1:11	The Holy Spirit is Jesus' own spirit of love shared with the Father.
SPIRIT OF GLORY	1 Peter 4:14	The Spirit always gives glory to Christ.

Name	Application
BREATH OF THE ALMIGHTY	The Holy Spirit is the source of life from God. He is the one, through Christ, who connects us to God.
COUNSELOR COMFORTER	The Holy Spirit is our strength and comfort. We are to turn to him when we are in trouble and when we are weak, being assured that he intercedes with and for us.
SPIRIT OF COUNSEL	We need to make use of God's guidance by letting the Holy Spirit lead us and teach us.
ETERNAL SPIRIT	The Spirit is no mere created force. He is the timeless Creator who loves us eternally.
FREE SPIRIT	God gives us his willing Spirit to change our hard hearts and give us freedom.
GOD	The Holy Spirit is not a thing, a force, nor mere power. He is personal, and we are to worship and obey him as God.
GOOD SPIRIT	The Holy Spirit is God's good gift to us for help in the present.
HOLY SPIRIT	The same Holy Spirit given to us for life is given to make us holy as well.
LORD	The Holy Spirit is God present with us. He is our Lord.
POWER OF THE HIGHEST	God's power, the Holy Spirit can accomplish things through us that we cannot do ourselves.
SPIRIT OF MIGHT	Jesus' Spirit is God's strength given to us.
SPIRIT OF ADOPTION	God's love toward us as his children comes through the Holy Spirit. As the Spirit persuades us, we become part of God's family.
SPIRIT OF BURNING	God's Spirit cleanses and purifies from evil.
SPIRIT OF JUDGMENT	God's Spirit discerns and divides good from evil.
SPIRIT OF CHRIST (JESUS CHRIST)	Jesus has shared the Spirit of love with those who believe him.
SPIRIT OF GLORY	Christ's life is what the Spirit focuses us on.

Name	Comments
BREATH OF THE ALMIGHTY	The words in both Hebrew and Greek for “wind,” “breath,” and “spirit” all have similar origins. The idea of flowing life-giving air (see <i>Spirit of Life</i>) is what is meant.
COUNSELOR COMFORTER	<i>Paraclete</i> is the Greek word behind this name. It refers to an advocate, someone called alongside to strengthen and fight on behalf of another (see <i>Spirit of Counsel</i>).
SPIRIT OF COUNSEL	Jesus is called the Wonderful Counselor (Isaiah 9:6). Just as the Holy Spirit led Jesus to the wilderness (Luke 4:1), he leads us to truth as our Counselor (John 14:26).
ETERNAL SPIRIT	The Holy Spirit is co-eternal with God the Father and God the Son.
FREE SPIRIT	Without God's Spirit who makes us willing to receive him, we would never be free from the prison of sin.
GOD	We are to understand that God is one in his essence, but three in Person.
GOOD SPIRIT	We are not alone in the world. Christ's very own Spirit is with us to work all things for our good.
HOLY SPIRIT	The term <i>Holy Ghost</i> is sometimes used in place of <i>Holy Spirit</i> . <i>Ghost</i> today has a negative idea attached to it. The use of the qualifier “holy” is to distinguish God's Spirit from evil spirits.
LORD	The lordship of the Spirit means we are to obey him and not grieve him.
POWER OF THE HIGHEST	The same Greek word for <i>power</i> is the word from which we derive <i>dynamite</i> .
SPIRIT OF MIGHT	Jesus told us he would give us the Power of the Spirit (Acts 1:8).
SPIRIT OF ADOPTION	We may actually refer to God as “Daddy” (<i>Abba</i> in Aramaic) or “Father” because we have Jesus' Spirit in us.
SPIRIT OF BURNING	The Spirit of God often appears as fire (Matthew 3:11, Acts 2:3).
SPIRIT OF JUDGMENT	Jesus said the Holy Spirit would convict and judge the world (John 16:8).
SPIRIT OF CHRIST (JESUS CHRIST)	The very same Spirit of love that the Father shares with the Son is now given to us (1 John 1:3).
SPIRIT OF GLORY	The Holy Spirit is shaping our lives into the glorious pattern of Christ.

Name	References	Meaning
SPIRIT OF GOD	Genesis 1:2; 1 Corinthians 2:11; Job 33:4	The Holy Spirit is the Spirit of the Triune God.
SPIRIT OF YAHWEH. SPIRIT OF THE LORD YAHWEH	Isaiah 11:2; Isaiah 61:1	The Spirit has the sacred name of God—Yahweh.
SPIRIT OF GRACE	Zechariah 12:10; Hebrews 10:29	God's Spirit is a merciful spirit.
SPIRIT OF KNOWLEDGE	Isaiah 11:2	The Spirit is the Spirit of clarity of mind.
SPIRIT OF TRUTH	John 14:17; 15:26	The Holy Spirit is about truth, not falsehood.
SPIRIT OF UNDERSTANDING	Isaiah 11:2	The Spirit is understanding itself.
SPIRIT OF WISDOM	Isaiah 11:2; Ephesians 1:17	The Holy Spirit is wise.
SPIRIT OF LIFE	Romans 8:2	The Holy Spirit is life-giving (John 6:63).
SPIRIT OF THE LIVING GOD	2 Corinthians 3:3	The Holy Spirit is the Spirit of the God of life.
SPIRIT OF PROPHECY	Revelation 19:10	It is the Holy Spirit who inspires true prophecy.
SPIRIT OF REVELATION	Ephesians 1:17	God's spirit reveals his truth.
SPIRIT OF THE FATHER	Matthew 10:20	The Holy Spirit is the Spirit of the Father shared with Jesus.
SPIRIT OF THE FEAR OF THE LORD	Isaiah 11:2	The Spirit is the Spirit of reverence toward the Lord.
SPIRIT OF THE LORD (GOD)	Acts 5:9	The Spirit is the presence of the Lord.
SPIRIT OF THE SON	Galatians 4:6	The Spirit is the Spirit of Jesus, the Son, whom he shares with the Father.
SPIRIT	Matthew 4:1; John 3:6; 1 Timothy 4:1	The Holy Spirit is sometimes simply called "Spirit."

Name	Application
SPIRIT OF GOD	God is Spirit and truth (John 4:24).
SPIRIT OF YAHWEH. SPIRIT OF THE LORD YAHWEH	The Spirit can be called by the sacred name because he is God.
SPIRIT OF GRACE	We come to know God's grace only when the Spirit opens our hearts.
SPIRIT OF KNOWLEDGE	The Spirit does not lead to confusion but to true knowledge (1 Corinthians 14:33).
SPIRIT OF TRUTH	The Spirit leads us to truth, not error.
SPIRIT OF UNDERSTANDING	Not merely technical knowledge, the Spirit comprehends and understands our needs.
SPIRIT OF WISDOM	The Spirit is not merely intellectual, but personal as well: He is wise in the way he leads us.
SPIRIT OF LIFE	Just as our biological life requires breath and breathing, we need God's Spirit, his breath to truly live.
SPIRIT OF THE LIVING GOD	The Spirit of God is living and the giver of life to us.
SPIRIT OF PROPHECY	Because the Spirit is the source of prophecy, he helps us understand God's word.
SPIRIT OF REVELATION	It is the work of the Spirit to reveal God and his truth to us. (See <i>Spirit of Prophecy</i> and <i>Spirit of Truth</i> .)
SPIRIT OF THE FATHER	The Spirit of the Father and of Jesus has been sent to us by them.
SPIRIT OF THE FEAR OF THE LORD	The Holy Spirit will always lead us to revere God.
SPIRIT OF THE LORD (GOD)	We are to worship and obey the Spirit as Lord.
SPIRIT OF THE SON	The loving Spirit of the Son of God is now given to us.
SPIRIT	The Spirit is the integral essence of life, love, and truth.

Name	Comments
SPIRIT OF GOD	The Holy Spirit is the essence and core of the relationship between the Father and the Son.
SPIRIT OF YAHWEH. SPIRIT OF THE LORD YAHWEH	Jesus told his disciples to baptize in the name (singular) of the Father, Son and Holy Spirit (Matthew 28:19).
SPIRIT OF GRACE	Jesus accomplished the work of grace for us on the cross, but it is the Spirit who applies that grace to us by giving us faith.
SPIRIT OF KNOWLEDGE	Jesus is the shoot from Jesse's stem—in other words, the Messiah—that Isaiah prophesied; Jesus had the fullness of the Spirit of knowledge (Isaiah 11:1–2).
SPIRIT OF TRUTH	Jesus said he is truth. We receive his Spirit of truth.
SPIRIT OF UNDERSTANDING	Jesus said the Spirit would help us understand (John 16:12–15).
SPIRIT OF WISDOM	Wisdom is highly valued by God (see Proverbs). The Spirit is the source of all true wisdom.
SPIRIT OF LIFE	Jesus said he is life (John 14:6). His Spirit is the giver of that life.
SPIRIT OF THE LIVING GOD	God is called the Living God because he is life and the source of life through his Spirit to the world.
SPIRIT OF PROPHECY	All Scripture is inspired (God-breathed). The Spirit is the breath of inspiration (2 Timothy 3:16).
SPIRIT OF REVELATION	Revelation comes from the Father through Jesus by the Spirit who is the voice of God in us.
SPIRIT OF THE FATHER	The Spirit shared between the Father and Son, the Spirit of love, is now given to us. (See <i>Spirit of Christ</i> and <i>Spirit of the Son</i> .)
SPIRIT OF THE FEAR OF THE LORD	God is to be given awe and reverence. It is the Holy Spirit who inspires this attitude in us.
SPIRIT OF THE LORD (GOD)	The name indicates the identity of the Spirit as our Lord.
SPIRIT OF THE SON	The Spirit draws us into the love and fellowship that is between the Father and the Son.
SPIRIT	The Spirit is truly the source of all life; everything that exists does so only because of him.

SPIRIT *and* PRAYER

The Spirit of God is the Spirit of prayer. We can only approach God through Christ with the help of the Spirit. Jesus is humanity's only access to God (John 14:6). Since his ascension, Christ has not been physically present on earth; the only way to lay our requests and worship before him, and so before God, is by means of the Holy Spirit.

Jesus promised the gift of the Spirit in the life of his disciples (John 14:16–17) and the Bible tells us that one of the crucial tasks of the Spirit is to inspire and guide our prayers. When our weaknesses prevent us from relating to God correctly, the Spirit intercedes for us—that is, he pleads our case before God (Romans 8:26–27)—so we can rest assured that the Spirit is praying alongside us, making our prayers what they ought to be.

If we understand prayer as communication with God, then we will be able to see it more fully as a dialogue, rather than a monologue on our part. Prayer is a two-way conversation; the other half of our worship before God is God's guidance and clarity of his will to us. Just as we may only reach God in the Spirit through the truth of Christ (John 4:24), so also God's guidance and teaching comes to us only through Christ by means of the Spirit (John 14:26; 15:26; 16:12–14).

FRUIT *of the* SPIRIT

In Galatians 5:16–25, the Apostle Paul contrasts two different motivations for life: one that allows the sinful nature to lead it, and another that follows the promptings and guidance of the Spirit. The sinful nature produces attitudes and actions that oppose God's will (Galatians 5:19–21). The Spirit naturally leads one to attitudes and actions that are in step with the will of God. Paul calls these attitudes and actions *fruit of the Spirit*. Fruits are the way plants reproduce—they carry the seeds. They are aromatic, colorful and tasty so that they can please and attract carriers of their seed, who spread them and allow the plant to reproduce. The life of a person whom the Spirit leads produces fruit: attitudes and behavior that are pleasing to God and other people. These *fruit of the Spirit* are: **love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness and self-control** (Galatians 5: 22–23).



BAPTISM *of the* HOLY SPIRIT

Different Christian groups define the baptism of the Holy Spirit in different ways.

- For some the idea is intimately connected to water baptism and **initiation** into God's family. Jesus' own baptism seems to set the pattern, where water and the Spirit are both evident (Matthew 3:11–17). Paul speaks of this idea of being initiated into the church this way (1 Corinthians 12:13).
- For others, baptism of the Holy Spirit may be very distinct from water baptism. Here the emphasis is an **infusion** of power for ministry. The book of Acts recounts many instances in which this infusion took place apart from water baptism (Acts 2:4; 4:8).
- Still others regard the Spirit's work as centering on **identification** with Christ. Paul understands baptism and the work of the Spirit as connecting and conforming us to Christ's life by being baptized into or identified with his death (Romans 6:3–4).

In fact, all of these works—initiation, infusion and identification—are involved in the work of the Holy Spirit. His work, his baptism involves all three, though they may not all be in view together at one time. We are initiated into the life and body of Christ by the regenerating act of the Spirit. We are infused with God's power for ministry when the Spirit fills us with himself.

We are identified with Christ in his life, death, and resurrection as the Holy Spirit transforms us into Christ's image. All these things may be said to be part of the baptism of the Holy Spirit, for different passages in Scripture direct us to each of these. Yet, there is a sense in which these diverse works are one work of the same Spirit, though we may experience each at different times in our lives. This experiential time difference, coupled with what seems to be different definitions and usage of the term “baptism of the Holy Spirit” in Scripture has led to controversy between Christian groups over this issue.

If we step back to get the larger picture of this singular, timeless work of the Spirit, we may come to see baptism of the Holy Spirit as involving the entire work of the Spirit in, through, and on behalf of humanity.

BLASPHEMY AGAINST *the* HOLY SPIRIT

Jesus said, “*People will be forgiven for their sins and whatever blasphemies they utter, but whoever blasphemes against the Holy Spirit can never have forgiveness*” (Mark 3:28).

The issue of blasphemy against the Spirit has bothered many Bible readers.

What is blasphemy against the Holy Spirit?

Blasphemy involves an utterance or action that purposefully defames God. Blasphemies against God are prohibited by the third commandment (Exodus 20:7), yet people regularly misuse God’s name and are forgiven. Jesus’ name is a target of abuse, yet Christ himself teaches that these offenses may be forgiven (Luke 12:10). What makes blasphemy of the Holy Spirit different?

Jesus seems to be speaking about something bigger than mere words or actions directed against God’s Spirit. The context (Mark 3:30) helps us to see that what Jesus’ accusers were involved in was insisting that Jesus’ Spirit (the Holy Spirit) was at the core demonic, satanic, evil! The point seems to be not that the name calling itself could not be forgiven, but that the ramifications of their words would cause the speakers to reject God’s only offer of salvation.

Why?

Because the Holy Spirit is God’s final witness to Christ and his salvation! Whatever one may say of Christ, if the whisper of the Spirit in the ear or the shout of his voice in creation and history is ignored fully and finally, there can be no forgiveness, because there will be no regeneration, no conversion, no repentance.

Blasphemy of the Holy Spirit is thus tied to one of the Spirit’s most important works—revelation. In the end, it is the Spirit of Truth, the Spirit of Revelation who must turn the minds and hearts of the human race. If we do not listen to him, we shall never receive Christ, and if we never receive Christ, God will never forgive us.

GIFTS *of the* HOLY SPIRIT

The Bible clearly teaches that the Spirit distributes gifts to everyone who believes in Christ. The following is a list of gifts and the chapters where they are found.

Study Tip

In addition to Paul's list of gifts, the apostle Peter also mentions gifts, dividing them into speaking and serving categories (1 Peter 4:10–11). Compare Paul's list to see how it also divides roughly into half speaking and half serving gifts. The book of Acts is also another great place to see the gifts in action. As you read through the book make a note whenever you encounter the use of one of the gifts listed above.

The Holy Spirit gives gifts with particular spiritual functions for the benefit of the entire church. Paul's teaching in 1 Corinthians 12 speaks about the organic unity of Christ's body, the Church. The gifts complement each other and work together for the common good, much as the parts of the body are designed to do. Because this is true, the gifts are given to the church as a whole. It is only within the context of the believing community that the gifts are made to work and only within that community that they can be discovered in the first place.

Our understanding of gifts and gifting depends on how we view the Holy Spirit. He is God's gift to us as individuals and as a body (see Acts 2:38 and 10:45). Individuals who have come into this life, the life of Christ, are automatically part of a larger whole. These gifts operate as parts of a whole. Gifting, reception of the Spirit, and membership in the Body of Christ are all connected in the life of the believer and for the good of the whole church.

	Rom 12	1 Cor 12	Eph 4
Apostleship		X	X
Prophecy	X	X	X
Evangelism			X
Pastoring			X
Teaching	X	X	X
Exhortation	X		
Knowledge		X	
Wisdom		X	
Discerning of Spirits		X	
Leadership	X		
Administration		X	
Service/Helps	X	X	
Acts of Mercy	X		
Giving	X		
Healing		X	
Faith		X	
Miracles		X	
Speaking & Interpreting Tongues		X	
Miscellaneous: Perhaps Celibacy Hospitality		(Matthew 19:12) (Romans 12:13)	

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