



Old Testament Reading: Joel 2:15-32  
New Testament Reading: Acts 2:1-21

## **In Search of Old Paths**

### **“I Believe in the Holy Ghost”**

### **Ephesians 1:13-14**

**Wayne J. Edwards, Pastor**

With this study on the Person and work of the Holy Spirit, we enter the third section of the Apostle’s Creed.

- The first confession was about God the Father: **“I believe in God the Father Almighty, Maker of Heaven and Earth.**
- The second confession was about God the Son: **“I believe in Jesus Christ His only Son, our Savior.”**
- The third confession is about God the Holy Spirit: **“I believe in the Holy Ghost.”**

- Notice how the Creed moves from the **creative work** of God the Father, to the **redemptive work** of God the Son, and now the **re-creative work** of the Holy Spirit, which is His work in us; conforming us to the image of the One who saved us, even Jesus our Savior and Lord.

The term “Holy Ghost” was appropriate for 16<sup>th</sup>– century English, because, at that time, the term “ghost” referred to the human spirit or soul, whether living or dead.

- In this context, the term “ghost” does not refer to the shadowy form of disembodied spirits, such as Shakespeare’s ghosts, but rather to the spiritual or psychic energy that gives life to every human body.
- Just as the Triune Godhead is defined as God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Spirit, human beings are divided into body, soul, and spirit, with the highest part of man being his spirit, for it is through his spirit that mankind connects with the Spirit of God.
- In Ephesians 2:1-3, Colossians 2:13, Romans 5:12, and Romans 8:6-7, the Bible says that all humans are born spiritually dead – separated from God and unable to respond to His truth, because of Adam’s sin.
- Therefore, as Jesus told Nicodemus, we must be “born again” by the Holy Spirit to understand the things of God.
- However, the Holy Spirit is not an “it” or a “force,” but He is the third Person of the Triune Godhead.
- The Bible teaches that the Holy Spirit’s primary role in God’s plan of salvation is to convict the world of sin, righteousness, and judgment, leading them to sincere repentance and genuine faith in Jesus Christ. (John 16:8)

According to a recent survey of conservative theologians and pastors, the study of the doctrine of the Holy Spirit is the most neglected study in the Church today.

- While the Holy Spirit is mentioned over 90 times in the Old Testament and over 260 times in the New Testament, His person and work are often overlooked or underemphasized in today’s pulpits and even in today’s seminaries.

**“If the Holy Spirit was withdrawn from the church today, 95 percent of what we do would go on and no one would know the difference. If the Holy Spirit had been withdrawn from the New Testament church, 95 percent of what they did would stop, and everybody would know the difference.”**

**A.W. Tozer**

**1. When we say ‘I believe in the Holy Ghost,’ we are confessing that the Holy Spirit is the third Person of the Trinity – John 15:26 – “*But when the Helper comes, whom I shall send to you from the Father, the Spirit of truth who proceeds from the Father, He will testify of Me.*”**

- The work of the Holy Spirit is to draw people to see and receive Jesus Christ as their Savior and Lord – never to draw attention to Himself.
- In Acts 5, Luke recorded how Ananias and Sapphira told the Apostles they were going to sell some land and give the funds to the church. However, once the land was sold, they kept back some of the proceeds for themselves.
- In Acts 5:3-4, “*Peter said, ‘Ananias, why has Satan filled your heart to lie to the Holy Spirit and keep back part of the price of the land for yourself? You have not lied to men but to God.’”*
- In John 14:16-17, Jesus told His disciples, “*I will pray the Father, and He will give you another Helper, that He may abide with you forever— the Spirit of truth, whom the world cannot receive, because it neither sees Him nor knows Him; but you know Him, for He dwells with you and will be in you.*”
- The Greek word for “Helper” is “Paraclete,” which describes one who is called alongside to help another. Jesus said the Holy Spirit would function as a Counselor, Advocate, Comforter; and an Intercessor whose task is to strengthen the believer.
- Therefore, the Holy Spirit is distinct from God the Father and God the Son, yet He is co-existent, co-equal, and co-eternal; He is the third Person of the Triune Godhead.

**2. When we say “I believe in the Holy Ghost,” we are confessing that the Holy Spirit makes us one with Christ. 1 Corinthians 12:3 – “*Therefore, I make known to you that no one speaking by the Spirit of God says, ‘Jesus is accursed’; and no one can say, ‘Jesus is Lord,’ except by the Spirit.*”**

- The indwelling presence of the Holy Spirit also assures us of our eternal redemption through our faith in Jesus Christ.
- In Ephesians 1:13-14, the Apostle Paul said the indwelling presence of the Holy Spirit is also the mark of God’s ownership – His personal presence is God’s guarantee of our future inheritance. “*In Him, (Christ) you also were sealed in Him with the Holy Spirit of promise, who is given as a pledge of our inheritance, with a view to the redemption of God’s own possession, to the praise of His glory.*”

### **3. When we say “I believe in the Holy Ghost,” we are confessing that we have a personal relationship with God, through Him, that we are led by Him, and that it is through Him that we experience what it means to be sons and heirs of God.**

- In Ephesians 3:14-19, Paul told the Ephesians, ***“For this reason, I bow my knees before the Father, from whom every family on heaven and earth derives its name, that He would grant you, according to the riches of His glory, to be strengthened with power through His Spirit in the inner man, so that Christ may dwell in your hearts through faith.”***
- In Romans 8:13-14, the Apostle Paul said our “sonship” with God the Father is through the Holy Spirit. ***“For if you live according to the flesh you will die; but if by the Spirit you put to death the deeds of the body, you will live. For as many as are led by the Spirit of God, these are sons of God.”***
- In Galatians 5:22-26, the Apostle Paul said, the essential evidence that a believer is being led by the Holy Spirit, is that they are bearing the fruit of the Holy Spirit. ***“But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, self-control. If we live in the Spirit, let us also walk in the Spirit.”***