

The Work of the Holy Spirit

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Lesson 1:

Applying Good Study Methods to the Holy Spirit Passages

Why Study the Holy Spirit?

- ◆ Will a study produce edification and harmony or confusion and controversy?
- ◆ Views of the subject differ widely.
 - | Many views are strongly held.
 - | Some believe that other's views endanger souls.

Objective study should provide edification, possibly harmony.

The Approach in this Study

◆ Is not to:

- | Quote men; use man-made descriptors.
- | Devise new doctrines from difficult passages.

◆ Is to:

- | Apply good Bible study methods.
- | Let the context guide our understanding of the passage.

***To use Scriptures
to interpret the Scriptures.***

The Objective of This Study

- ◆ Is not to:
 - | Defend one of the popular positions.
 - | Impose my views on you.
- ◆ Is to:
 - | Stimulate deeper study of the Bible.
 - | Illustrate some important factors in interpreting the Scriptures.
 - | Show alternative interpretations to several “Holy Spirit” passages.

***To make sure your view
is an informed choice.***

Principles of Interpretation

- ① Be aware of key issues in translation.
- ② Interpret words and phrases in context.
- ③ Consider who is speaking and who he represents?
- ④ Consider who is being spoken about and who they represent?
- ⑤ Consider how the original audience would have understood the meaning?

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- ◆ Supplying text.

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HOLY SPIRIT

REFERENCE SOURCEBOOK

A spiral-bound notebook with a light yellow page and a brown cover. The spiral binding is on the left side. The text is centered on the page.

***SUPPLIED CAPITAL
LETTERS***

Greek manuscripts do not have capital letters on proper nouns.

- Early Greek manuscripts were written in all capital letters.

ΠΑΝΤΑ ΔΙ' ΑΥΤΟΥ ΕΓΕΝΕΤΟ ΙΣΧΥ
ΡΘΙΣ ΑΥΤΟΥ ΕΓΕΝΕΤΟ ΟΥΔΕΝ·

Sample of fifth-century Greek text of John 1

- Later Greek manuscripts were all lower case letters.
- The Greek text does not capitalize names of people or names referring to Deity.

The absence of clues about names in the Greek text makes translation difficult.

- | Sometimes it is not clear whether to treat a word as a name.
- | For example: the first phrase in II John 1 could be translated either:

<i>Ἦ</i>	<i>presbutero"</i>	<i>eklektōi</i>	<i>kuria</i>
The	Elder	to <i>the</i> elect	lady
The	Elder	to <i>the</i> elect	Kuria

The choice must be made based on the context.

Capitalization is crucial when it involves the word “spirit.”

The introduction to Berry's *Interlinear Greek-English New Testament* warns:

5. CAPITALS— ... The greatest difficulty is touching the word ‘Spirit.’

In some places it is very difficult to say whether the Holy Spirit as a person or the spirit of the Christian is referred to

... in some places it is really doubtful, and becomes a question for the spiritual judgment of the reader.

The Greek will not help in the difficulty, because in the earliest copies every letter was a capital.

Capitalization is crucial when it involves the word “spirit.”

(James 4:5 KJV) Do ye think that the scripture saith in vain, The spirit that dwelleth in us lusteth to envy?

God put a human spirit “within us.”

(1 Cor 6:20 KJV) ... glorify God in your body, and in your spirit, which are God's.

(James 4:5 NKJV) Or do you think that the Scripture says in vain, "The Spirit who dwells in us yearns jealously"?

① Be aware of key issues in translation.

- ◆ Supplying capital letters that are not in the Greek text.
- ◆ Supplying text.

A spiral-bound notebook with a brown cover and a cream-colored page. The spiral binding is on the left side. A horizontal line is drawn across the page, just above the main text.

***SUPPLIED
ARTICLES
(a, an, & the)***

Translators decide whether or not to supply an adjective (“a” or “the”).

- ▮ **The Greek text often does not have an adjective before nouns.**
- ▮ **To make readable English sentences an adjective must be chosen.**
- ▮ **It is very important whether the word “a” or the word “the” is supplied before the words “holy spirit.”**
- ▮ **Supplying capital letters and the definite article “the” changes “a holy spirit” into “the Holy Spirit.”**

A graphic of a spiral-bound notebook with a brown cover and a cream-colored page. The spiral binding is on the left side. A horizontal line is drawn across the page, just above the main text.

“The Holy Spirit”

OR

“a holy spirit”

Capital letters and adjectives change “a holy spirit” into “the Holy Spirit”!

┆ The Greek text is:

en crhstothti, en pneumatih agiwh
by kindness by spirit holy

┆ The situation occurs in II Cor. 6:6.

(2 Cor 6:6 NKJV) ... by kindness, by the Holy Spirit, by sincere love,

(2 Cor 6:6 EVT) ... by kindness, by a holy spirit, by sincere love,

EVT = Equally Valid Translation

Examples of Questionable Interpretations

(Rom 14:17 NKJV) for the kingdom of God is not eating and drinking, but righteousness and peace and joy in the Holy Spirit.

(Rom 14:17 EVT) for the kingdom of God is not eating and drinking, but righteousness and peace and joy in a holy spirit.

EVT = Equally Valid Translation

Examples of Questionable Interpretations

(Jude 1:20 NKJV) But you, beloved, building yourselves up on your most holy faith, praying in the Holy Spirit,

(Jude 1:20 EVT) But you, beloved, building yourselves up on your most holy faith, praying in a holy spirit,

EVT = Equally Valid Translation

Examples of Questionable Interpretations

(1 Th 4:7 KJV) For God hath not called us unto uncleanness, but unto holiness.

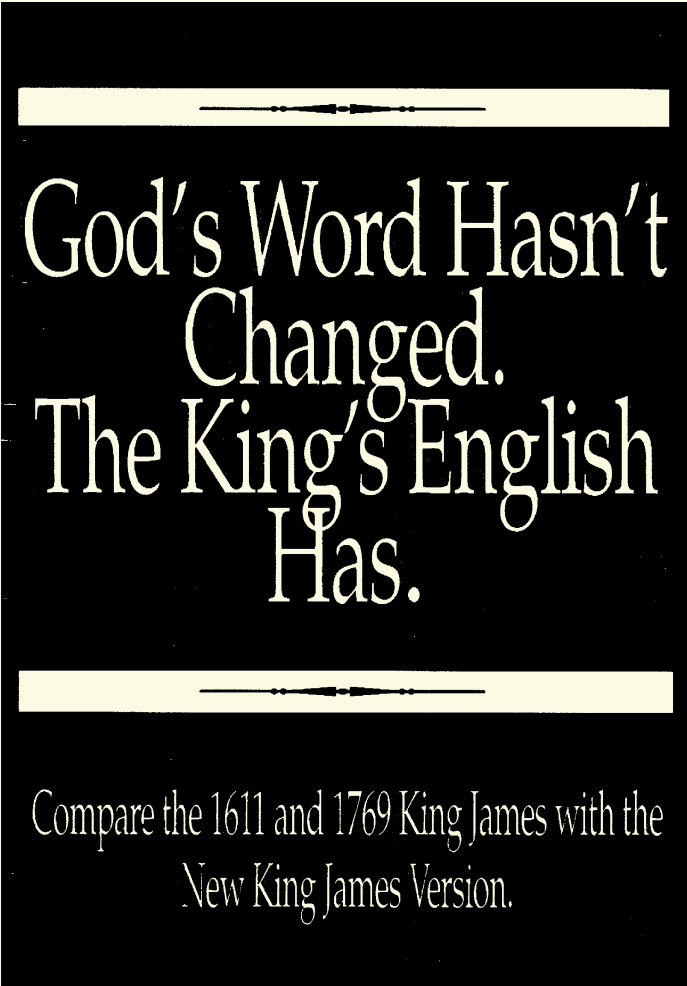
(1 Th 4:8 KJV) He therefore that despiseth, despiseth not man, but God, who hath also given unto us his holy Spirit. [EVT—his holy spirit]

(1 Th 4:9 KJV) ... ye yourselves are taught of God to love one another.

EVT = Equally Valid Translation

The 1611 King James Version

- | Some suggest that capitalization of the word “Spirit” in the KJV represents the scholarship of the 1611 translators.
- | This is not the case.



God's Word Hasn't
Changed.
The King's English
Has.

Compare the 1611 and 1769 King James with the
New King James Version.

Sampler Including Parallel Texts of Romans

Romans 8:1, 4, 5 in the 1611 KJV (from version “sampler” by Thomas Nelson, Inc.)



Here is therefore now no condemnation to them which are in Christ Iesus, who walke not after the flesh, but after the **spirit.**

4 That the righteousnesse of the law might be fulfilled in vs, who walke not after the flesh, but after the **spirit.**

5 For they that are after the flesh, doe minde the things of the flesh : but they that are after the **spirit,** the things of the **spirit.**

Capital letters on “spirit” were the interpretation of later revisers.

Conclusions

- | Seeing “the Holy Spirit” (with capital letters) in the text influences many to conclude that certain passages are necessarily referring to the Holy Spirit.
- | In many passages, “the Holy Spirit” versus “a holy spirit” is purely a matter of the human judgment of the translators.

Trust the CONTEXT, not the translators.

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② Interpret words and phrases in context.

◆ How do we determine the meaning of words?

- | Look them up in an English dictionary?
- | Look them up in a Greek lexicon?
- | Look at a Greek reference work (*Vincent's* or *Robertson's*)?
- ✓ Look at other uses in the Greek text of the New Testament?

✓ ***This method is as free as possible of human biases and interpretations.*** 28



GREEK WORD STUDY

***Strong's Exhaustive Concordance
and
New Englishman's Greek Concordance
and Lexicon (Wigram-Green)***

Sample entry from *Strong's* showing all uses of the English word "fellowship."

FELLOWSHIP

delivered him to keep, or in <i>f</i>	Lev 6:2	8667
of iniquity have <i>f</i> with thee	Ps 94:20	2266
in the apostles' doctrine and <i>f</i>	Acts 2:42	2842
the <i>f</i> of his Son Jesus Christ our	1Cor 1:9	2842
that ye should have <i>f</i> with devils	1Cor 10:20	2844
for what <i>f</i> hath righteousness	2Cor 6:14	3352
take upon us the <i>f</i> of the	2Cor 8:4	2842
and Barnabas the right hands of <i>f</i>	Gal 2:9	2842
see what is the <i>f</i> of the mystery	Eph 3:9	2842
have no <i>f</i> with the unfruitful	Eph 5:11	4790
For your <i>f</i> in the gospel from the	Phil 1:5	2842
if any <i>f</i> of the Spirit, if any	Phil 2:1	2842
the <i>f</i> of his sufferings, being	Phil 3:10	2842
that ye also may have <i>f</i> with us	1Jn 1:3	2842
truly our <i>f</i> is with the Father,	1Jn 1:3	2842
If we say that we have <i>f</i> with him	1Jn 1:6	2842
we have <i>f</i> one with another, and	1Jn 1:7	2842

Sample entry from *Wigram's* showing uses of a single Greek word (*koinwniā*).

2842 439 **κοινωνία** 3:789 352a
n.f. *partnership, fellowship*, Ac 2:42; Php 1:5; Hb
13:16; 1 Co 10:16; Php 3:10; Rm 15:26. ✓ 2844
Acts 2:42. and **fellowship**, and in breaking of bread,
Ro. 15:26. to make a certain **contribution**
1Co. 1: 9. called unto the *fellowship* of his Son
10:16. is it not the **communion** of the blood
— is it not the communion of the body
2Co. 6:14. what *communion* hath light
8: 4. and (take upon us) the *fellowship*
9:13. for (your) liberal **distribution**

② Interpret words and phrases in context.

- ◆ Look at the closest possible context.
 - ✓ Same speaker on the same occasion.
 - ✓ Same writer in the same book.
 - ✓ Same speaker on another occasion.
 - ✓ Same writer in another book.
 - | Same Greek phrase used elsewhere.
 - | Same Greek word used elsewhere.
 - | Teaching on the same subject somewhere in the Scriptures.
- ✓ *Let each writer/speaker define his own words and phrases.*

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③ Consider who is speaking and who he represents.

- ◆ When Paul says “we,” does he refer to:
 - | “We” the apostles?
 - | “We” the Jews?
 - | “We” the prophets (those who had miraculous abilities)?
 - | “We” Christians (all Christians of all times)?

③ Consider who is speaking and who he represents.

- ◆ Who does the speaker represent?
 - | When Paul says, “I speak ... by revelation ... by prophesying ...” (I Cor. 14:6), does he imply that we should also?
 - | When Paul says, “I speak with tongues” (I Cor. 14:18), does he imply all Christians of all times will do so?
 - | When Paul says, “we prophesy” (I Cor. 13:9), does that “we” include us?

Be sure you are included in a speaker's statement before applying it to you.

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④ Consider who is being spoken about and who they represent.

◆ When an audience is told:

- | (John 14:12 NKJV) ... he who believes in Me, the works that I do he will do also ...
- | (Mark 16:17-18 NKJV) ... these signs will follow those who believe: ... they will cast out demons; ... speak with new tongues ... lay hands on the sick ...”
- | (John 14:26 NKJV) “... the Holy Spirit ... will teach you all things, and bring to your remembrance all things that I said to you.
- | (John 16:13 NKJV) “... He, the Spirit of truth ... will guide you into all truth ...

Some passages are not descriptive of all Christians of all times.

④ Consider who is being spoken about and who they represent.

- ◆ Paul says that God had established, anointed, sealed, and given a guarantee to “us.”
 - | (2 Cor 1:21-22 NKJV) Now He who establishes us with you in Christ and has anointed us is God, who also has sealed us and given us the Spirit in our hearts as a guarantee.
- ◆ But, who is “us”?
 - | Let the context supply the answer, not conclusions brought to the text.

④ Consider who is being spoken about and who they represent.

◆ Paul maintains the distinction between the three preachers and the audience.

(2 Cor 1:19 NKJV) For the Son of God, Jesus Christ, who was preached among you by us; by me, Silvanus, and Timothy [Paul defines "us"] ...

(2 Cor 1:21 NKJV) Now He who establishes us with you in Christ and has anointed us is God,

(2 Cor 1:22 NKJV) who also has sealed us and given us the Spirit in our hearts as a guarantee. ...

(2 Cor 1:24 NKJV) Not that we have dominion over your faith, but are fellow workers for your joy; for by faith you stand.

④ Consider who is being spoken about and who they represent.

- ◆ These verses say that Paul, Silas, and Timothy were anointed, sealed, and given a guarantee/earnest.
 - | Paul, Silas, and Timothy surely had the miraculous gifts of the Holy Spirit.
 - | Those who teach that some today are anointed, sealed, and given a guarantee need to establish that conclusion with a passage that clearly includes all Christians of all times.

A text taken from its context becomes a pretext.

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⑤ How would the original audience have understood the meaning?

- ◆ Discerning the message to the original audience should be our first goal.
- ◆ We should be wary of interpretations that could not possibly have been the understanding of that audience.

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