

***Sabbath School Today***  
**With the 1888 Message Dynamic**

***The Holy Spirit and Spirituality***  
**Lesson 3. The Divinity of the Holy Spirit**

How do we know that the Holy Spirit is God? Because the 1888 message helps us to see the Divine love of the Holy Spirit. Follow the *agape* and you'll soon conclude that the Holy Spirit is God.

*Agape* derives from the highest Intelligent Being in the universe, which can only be God. The Holy Spirit is the One who sheds the love of God abroad in our hearts (Rom. 5:5). Therefore, He administers God's love. He gives us righteousness by faith, which is *agape* by faith. The much-anticipated latter rain of the Holy Spirit is an unprecedented outpouring of *agape*.

The Spirit is a Person who loves. Paul implores the church members at Rome "for the Lord Jesus Christ's sake, and for the love of the Spirit," to pray for him (Rom. 15:30). Only a person can love. The Father is a Person, and He loves us (see John 3:16); the Son is a Person, and He loves us (see John 13:1). As a person, the Holy Spirit also loves us.

If you love, you love forever, for as Abraham Lincoln said, "Love is eternal." Love has its source in God, for the Bible says that "God is love" (1 John 4:8), and He is eternal.

The new covenant God promised to Abraham was the blessing of the Holy Spirit (Gal. 3:14). Abraham believed God's promise and "it was accounted to him for righteousness" (vs. 6). The Holy Spirit was the active agent in making Abraham righteous. Righteousness is moral power. It is right living. Righteousness is *agape*, and the Holy Spirit "puts" this Divine love into receptive hearts like Abraham's.

In the Book of Hebrews the Apostle writes that the Spirit is the Lord [Jehovah] who spoke the new covenant in Jeremiah 31:33. "The Holy Spirit also is a witness to us: for after that He had said before, This is the covenant that I will make with them after those days, saith the Lord, I will put my laws into their hearts, and in their minds will I write them" (Heb. 10:15, 16). The Holy Spirit, Jehovah, promised that He would inscribe "my laws" into the hearts of Israel. The point to be noticed is that the laws derive from the Spirit.

An atheist astronomer who studies the universe is able to discover certain laws governing it. But he would never claim for the cosmos a moral operative. The atheist would never say the universe is benevolent and loving. He would be more inclined to say that the discoverable laws of the universe are just there and one had better work with them and not against them or suffer the consequences.

The Holy Spirit cannot be just a force, influence, or operational law of the universe proceeding from God. The Spirit is law. The Apostle Paul wrote of “the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus” (Rom. 8:2). Only Divine Intelligence can make moral law and particularly law with a foundation of *agape*. Jesus recognized *agape* as the basis of moral law. “Thou shalt *love* the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind. This is the first and great commandment. And the second is like unto it, Thou shalt *love* thy neighbor as thyself” (Matt. 22:37-39).

It's beyond logic to think that cold, hard, facts of the law of physics could “put” the Holy Spirit's love of justification by faith into human hearts. Therefore by following the *agape* we conclude that the Holy Spirit is God.

The plan of salvation to redeem sinners is *agape* through and through devised by three persons. It is *agape* that makes the Godhead one. It is *agape* that motivates the Father to reconcile the world unto Himself through Jesus Christ. It is *agape* which actuated Christ to serve humanity and then suffer and die on His cruel cross in order to save the world. And it is *agape* which moves the Holy Spirit to convict the world of sin, righteousness [justification], and judgment (John 16:8-10).

The Holy Spirit loves us so much that He initiates conviction of our need for Jesus' righteousness. Jesus is the source of righteousness because immediately following the word “righteousness” Jesus said, “because I go to my Father” (John 16:10). The Holy Spirit is so intimately united with Christ that Jesus said, “He shall receive of mine, and shall show it unto you” (John 16:14).

When Jesus was received of the Father, following His resurrection, His sinless life and perfect sacrifice were such a demonstration of *agape* for sinners that Heaven's approval was signified by the release of the Spirit in an heretofore, unprecedented way at Pentecost. Pentecost was a fulfillment of the new covenant promise which was “the blessing of Abraham” (Gal. 3:14). The Spirit bestowed Jesus' righteousness upon the world. God's pardon for the whole world of sinners was bestowed. And, for those who appreciate this gift of Divine love, given at such great cost, they are “accounted” righteous just as their father Abraham as made righteous (Gal. 3:6).

The Holy Spirit's Divine love accomplished the atonement of the sinful heart with God. Faith was activated. The hearts of the Apostles and thousands of other believers were so reconciled to God that they could no longer live for self, but for Him who died for them. It was the Holy Spirit's love that did it. And the believers' oneness with God was manifested by obedience to all of God's love-based commandments. The Ten Commandments became for them as so many new covenant promises of the Holy Spirit. Their human hearts were spontaneously moved to obey.

Thus, it is the Holy Spirit whose love for the church and the world accomplishes the bestowal of justification—God's great pardon of the world literally from hell, which is the second death. The Spirit reveals that “God was in Christ, reconciling the world unto Himself, not imputing their trespasses unto them” (2 Cor. 5:19). It is the Spirit who

“put[s] my laws into their hearts, and in their minds” (Heb. 10:16) in fulfillment of the new covenant.

As such, this is the cleansing of the sanctuary truth. The Holy Spirit in the 1888 message points the way to a clearer understanding of the consistency between justification by faith and the sanctuary truth. The 1888 message is the only understanding of justification by faith which is parallel to and consistent with the cleansing of the sanctuary, and is in harmony with the law of God. The 1888 message is the only gospel that doesn't nullify or diminish the law of God.

By opening our hearts to appreciate this truth of the sanctuary we have an entirely different experience. Let the Holy Spirit guide your mind and heart into this clearer understanding of the gospel sanctuary truth. Following the *agape* of the Holy Spirit leads us to the conclusion that He is one of the three persons of the Godhead along with the Father and the Son Jesus Christ.

—*Paul E. Penno*

**Notes:**

Pastor Paul Penno's video of this lesson is on the Internet at:

[https://youtu.be/1NGVbw0Km\\_E](https://youtu.be/1NGVbw0Km_E)

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