

Sabbath School Lesson # Introduction – The Holy Spirit and Spirituality – 1st Qtr 2017

Many of us have heard the words: “And I baptize you in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit.” And, if baptized, we surely heard them just before a minister immersed us in the water (see *Matt. 28:19*). Baptized in the name of the father, the Son, *and the Holy Spirit*. Yes, the Spirit is mentioned right there with the Father and the Son.’ – writes Dr Frank M Hasel in the *Introduction* of 1st Quarter 2017 SS Lesson.

Towards the end, Dr Hasel then quotes Ellen White: “The Spirit was to be given as a generating agent, *and without this the sacrifice of Christ would have been of no avail*. The power of evil had been strengthening for centuries, and the submission of men to this satanic captivity was amazing. Sin could be resisted and overcome only through the mighty agency of the Third Person of the Godhead, who would come with no modified energy, but in the fullness of divine power. It is the Spirit that makes effectual what has been wrought out by the world’s Redeemer” – Ellen G. White, *The Desire of Ages*, p. 671, *italics supplied*.’

The Lessons in the 1st Quarter of 2017 are about the Holy Spirit, but are written from the trinity perspective. Thus Dr Hasel quotes – “Third Person of the Godhead.” How should we understand this *seemingly* trinity support in the writings of Ellen White? Ellen White gave us the rule: “The testimonies themselves will be the key that will explain the messages given, as scripture is explained by scripture” {1SM 42.2}. As the Bible is explained by the Bible, “precept upon precept, line upon line, here a little and there a little” (Isaiah 28:10), so Ellen White’s writings are explained by her own writings. Let Ellen White explain herself on this:

Let us first consider two similar statements. “The prince of the power of *evil can only be held in check* by the power of God in the third person of the Godhead, the Holy Spirit” {Ev 617.2}. This is similar to the statement in *Desire of Ages* p. 671: “*Sin could be resisted and overcome only through the mighty agency of the Third Person of the Godhead*, who would come with no modified energy, but in the fullness of *divine power*” (*emphasis supplied*).

Both statements are exclusive in force: “*evil can only be held*” and “*sin could be resisted and overcome only*” by the power of God in the third person and through the mighty agency of the third person. Who is this third person who is the *only* one who can “break the hold of evil”? “There is *but one power* that can break the hold of evil from the hearts of men, and that is *the power of God in Jesus Christ*. *Only* through the blood of the Crucified One is there cleansing from sin. *His grace alone* can enable us to resist and subdue the tendencies of our fallen nature” (*Testimonies* vol. 8 p. 291, 1903). On the same page in *Desire of Ages*, Ellen White clearly identifies what this power is: “*Christ has given His Spirit as a divine power to overcome all hereditary and cultivated tendencies to evil, and to impress His own character upon His church*” (DA p. 671). “The *only defense against evil* is the indwelling of *Christ in the heart* through faith in His righteousness” (*Desire of Ages* p. 324) (*emphasis supplied*).

“When God’s people take the position that they are the temple of the Holy Ghost, *Christ Himself abiding within*, they will so clearly reveal Him in spirit, words, and actions, that there will be an unmistakable distinction between them and Satan’s followers.” {SpM 243.4}.

“There must be a *power working from within*, a new life from above, before men can be changed from sin to holiness. *That power is Christ*. His grace alone can quicken the lifeless faculties of the soul, and attract it to God, to holiness.” – (Steps to Christ, p. 18) (*emphasis*).

“The Holy Spirit, *which proceeds from the only begotten Son of God*, binds the human agent, body, soul, and spirit, to the perfect, divine-human nature of Christ.” – (Review and Herald, April 5, 1906 par. 16). “Let them be thankful to God for His manifold mercies and be kind to one another. They have one God and one Saviour; *and one Spirit – the Spirit of Christ* – is to bring unity into their ranks.” – (Testimonies, vol 9, p. 189, – 1909) (*emphasis*).

Christ is the Third Person that Ellen White meant in *Desire of Ages*; Christ lived with men in body form and overcame sin, Christ lives in men in Spirit form and overcomes sin in men.

But then, who exactly is the “third” person of the trinity? It is Satan! The third individual in heaven before the fall of Lucifer was Lucifer himself. First = God; second = Son of God; third = Lucifer. The Holy Spirit was never the third, for the Holy Spirit has always been the Spirit of God whom same Spirit is of Christ (Romans 8:9). After the fall, Gabriel took over the third position. Satan wanted to maintain his third position on earth, he created the trinity doctrine, and he is worshipped through the trinity as the third divine individual even those in his original third position he was never elevated to a god, now he ascends through the trinity as the third god whom the people of God must worship! No shocking apostasy than that!

What is the divine order as given in Ellen White’s writings? And who is the “third” person of the trinity? Here is the summary before, during and after the fall of Lucifer. Before the fall of Lucifer: (1) “God is a moral governor as well as a Father. He is the Lawgiver. He makes

and executes His laws” {12MR 208.2}. (2) “The Son of God was next in authority to the great Lawgiver” {2SP 9.1}. (3a) “Satan was once a covering cherub in the heavenly courts, the angel next in power to Christ Himself” {CTr 200.2}. (3b) “Satan in Heaven, before his rebellion, was a high and exalted angel, next in honor to God’s dear Son” {1SP 17.1}. The rebellion of Lucifer: (4) “Satan’s dissatisfaction first commenced in heaven because he could not be first and highest in command – equal with God, exalted above Christ. He rebelled and lost his estate; and he, and those who sympathized with him, were turned out of heaven” {1T 293.3}. After the fall of Lucifer: (5a) “It was Gabriel, the angel next in rank to the Son of God, who came with the divine message to Daniel” {DA 234.2}. (5b) “The words of the angel, ‘I am Gabriel, that stand in the presence of God,’ show that he holds a position of high honor in the heavenly courts. ... Wonderful thought – that the angel who stands next in honor to the Son of God is the one chosen to open the purposes of God to sinful men” {DA 99.1}.

Holy Spirit? “God will communicate by *His own Spirit* with the soul. Pray as you study, ‘Open Thou mine eyes, that I may behold wondrous things out of Thy law,’ Psalm 119:18. When the teacher will rely upon God in prayer, the *Spirit of Christ* will come upon him, and God will work through him by the Holy Spirit upon the mind of the student” {CT 172.2}.

Matthew 28:19: “Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost” – is this a trinity verse? It is not if we apply the rule: “precept upon precept; line upon line” (Isaiah 28:10). First, there are absolutely no examples of the disciples ever obeying a trinity reading of this verse – they all baptised only in the name of JESUS – Acts 2:38 “Peter said to them, ‘Repent, and each of you be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of your sins; and you will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit.’” Acts 8:16 “For He [Holy Spirit] had not yet fallen upon any of them; they had simply been baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus.” Acts 10:48 “And he ordered them to be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ. Then they asked him to stay on for a few days.” Acts 19:5 “When they heard this, they were baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus.”

Second, we find no example of baptising in three names in the Bible, but rather in a single name of Jesus. Romans 6:3 “Or do you not know that all of us who have been baptized into Christ Jesus have been baptized into His death?” Galatians 3:27 “For as many of you as have been baptized into Christ have put on Christ.” Acts 22:16 “And now why tarriest thou? arise, and be baptized, and wash away thy sins, calling on the name of the Lord.”

Third, it would be inconsistent with what Jesus taught about God, for Him to introduce a trinity at the last minute of His departure. In Mark 12:28-33, the scribes came and asked Jesus about the first commandment, and He answered “The first of all the commandments *is*, Hear, O Israel; The Lord our God is one Lord” – Jesus never taught a ‘triune god.’ Later in His closing prayers for His disciples, Jesus refers to God and Himself and not to a ‘triune god:’ “And this is life eternal, that they might know thee the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom thou hast sent” (John 17:3). Throughout His ministry, Jesus never even once referred to ‘God the Holy Spirit’ (as our church teach); if such a ‘God’ exists, it would be disrespectful for Jesus not to have never mentioned and acknowledged such a ‘God’ during His ministry.

Fourth, the first thing the verse requires is “Go ye therefore, and teach all nations” – teach what? The gospel. What is the heart of the gospel? “God so loved the world, that He gave His only begotten Son” (John 3:16). When should you be baptized? “If thou believest with all thine heart, thou mayest. And he answered and said, I believe that Jesus Christ is the Son of God” (Acts 8:37). But the trinity denies the very gospel: Sonship of Jesus. A Seventh-day Adventist Church paper sent to all our churches in the world in 1996 Week of Prayer stated that the Father-Son relationship is a mere role-play: “In order to eradicate sin and rebellion from the universe and to restore harmony and peace, one of the divine beings accepted and entered into the role of the Father, another the role of the Son” (Gordon Jenson, *Adventist Review*, 31 Oct 1996). They say that “the sonship of Jesus, however, is not ontological, but functional” (Gerhard Pfandl, BRI 1999); that the Sonship of our Jesus “should be understood in a metaphorical sense, not in a literal sense” (Max Hatton, 2001) – they ally with Satan to “obscure, that Christ was the only begotten Son of God” {TDG 128.1}. The Bible is clear: “He is antichrist, that denieth the Father and the Son” (1 John 2:22). It is a sham/façade to purport to baptize souls in fulfillment of Matthew 28:19 if Father/Son are roles/metaphors!

Fifth, in Matthew 28:19, Christ wants us to first accept the gospel, and then His Spirit will abide in us. Peter understood this. On the day of Pentecost, Peter said, “Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost” (Acts 2:38). Peter mentions (1) repentance towards God, (2) baptism in the name of Jesus, and (3) the gift of the Holy Spirit. Christ stated all three; by including the Spirit in His commission, Christ wants us to receive His Spirit (Galatians 4:6).