

Chapter Six

DEITY AND FUNCTIONS

AFFIRMATION 6

God, who is the Creator and Possessor of the whole Universe including all spirit, angelic and human beings (Gen. 1; 2; Jn. 1:1-3; Col. 1:13-18; Heb. 1: 1-3), is generally referred to as the only living and true God (Jer. 9:23, 24; Jn. 17:1-3; 1 Thess. 1:9). He is revealed by His deity and functions as the triune Godhead, Elohim – the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit – One God in co-equal co-eternal three Persons (Gen. 1:1; Matt. 28:19; 2 Cor. 13:14). The Bible further declares that He is self-existent and an eternal infinite Spirit that deserves our worship (Ex. 3:14; Jn. 4:23, 24). This great but good God of the Bible decided to share His moral attributes with humankind at creation (Gen. 1:26-28).

INTRODUCTION

There are two concepts about God that show humanity who God really is: (1) His Essence – God is One; (2) His Personality – God is three Persons in One Godhead (Acts 17:29; Rom. 1:20; Col. 2:10). In essence of God is revealed by sovereignty, holiness, righteousness, justice, love, eternal life, omnipotence, omnipresence, omniscience, immutability and truth or veracity. In personality God is revealed as God the Father, God the Son and God the Holy Spirit; each is a distinct and separate Person with corporate but separate functions, yet possessing identical characteristics or indivisible and inseparable essence of deity.

TRINITY IN CHART – BIBLICAL REFERENCES

The chart below shows that the Holy Spirit is equal to the other Members of the Trinity in divine attributes, proving the unity and equality of the Godhead.

THE UNITY AND EQUALITY OF THE TRIUNE GOD			
ATTRIBUTE	FATHER	SON	HOLY SPIRIT
GOD	Gen. 1:1	Is. 9:6; Jn. 1:2; 20:28; Rom. 9:5; Phil. 2:6; Heb. 11 :8	Acts 5:3-5
CREATOR	Gen. 1:1	Jn. 1:3, 10; Col. 1:16; Heb. 1:2, 10	Gen. 1:2; Job 26:13; 33:4
LIFE	Josh. 3:10	Is. 9:6; Mic. 5:2; Jn. 1:4; 8:58; Eph. 1:4; Col. 1:16, 17; Rev. 1:11	Jn. 6:63; Rom. 8:2, 10

ETERNAL	Ex. 3:13, 14; Deut. 33:27; Ps. 90:2, 37	Matt. 5:48	Heb. 9:14
IMMUTABLE	Num. 23:19; Mal. 3:6; Ps. 102:26, 27; Matt. 19:26; Js. 1:17	Jn. 1:1; Heb. 13:8	Jn. 14:16; 1 Cor. 2:13
OMNIPOTENT	Job 42: 1-2; Matt. 19:26; Lk. 2:37	Matt. 28:18; Jn. 1:3	Job 33:4; Lk. 1:35; Rom. 15:19; 1 Cor. 12:11
OMNIPRESENT	Prov. 15:3; Jer. 23:23-24	Matt. 18:20; 28:20	Ps. 139:7-12
OMNISCIENT	Ps. 139:1-6	Jn. 16:30	1 Cor. 3:10-11
HOLY	Lev. 11:44	Acts 3:14	Matt. 12:32
LOVE	Eph. 3:17; 1 Jn. 4:8	Rom. 8:37-39; Eph. 3:19	Gal. 5:22
TRUTH	Jn. 3:33; 7:28; 17:3	Jn. 14:6	Jn. 14:17; 1 Jn. 5:6
RIGHTEOUS	Ps. 145:17; Is. 51:8	Lk. 18:19; Jn. 17:25; 2 Cor. 5:21; Heb. 7:26	Ps. 145:17; Eph. 5:9
FAITHFUL	Deut. 7:9; 1 Cor. 1:9; 10:13; 1 Thess. 5:23, 24; Heb. 10:23; 1 Pet. 4:19; 1 Jn. 1:7-	Rev. 1:5; 3:14; 19:11	Gal. 5:23
SOVEREIGNTY	Ps. 83:18	Matt. 28:18; Rev. 19:6	1 Cor. 12:11
JUSTICE	Gen. 18:25; Deut. 32:4; Neh. 9:33	Jn. 5:27; 2 Tim. 4:8	Jn. 16:8

[Note: This chart is repeated in different forms on pages 119 and 150, 151]

From the above, we see that the three Persons in the Godhead are all equal in glory, power and characteristics; they all have the unique attributes of God.

It must, however, be explained that when Jesus walked on earth, He refused to use His three (3) “omnis” to accommodate both His human and divine natures at the same time, in what theologians call the *hypostatic union* (Phil. 2:5-11). He was thus not Omnipresent in His humanity as He was limited by space. Even though occasionally His divinity showed up like when He walked on the sea, He really assumed permanent right to Omnipresence, Omnipotence, and Omniscience as God when He again took His position with the Father after the resurrection, ascension and exaltation (Jn. 17:5; Acts 2:32-36; 5:31; Eph. 1:19-23; Phil. 2:9-11).

We also need to emphasize that the Holy Spirit is God and not a force, as the Jehovah's Witnesses and the others would want the world to believe. As shown in the chart above, He bears all attributes of God; but as a distinctive Person of the triune Godhead, and so rightly called God (Acts 5:3-5).

1. The Father

In the Bible, whenever God is referred to without any distinction to any member of the triune Godhead, the reference is primarily to the Father (Deut. 6:4; Jn. 6:27-29; Eph. 2:19; 3:19; 4:6; 5:1; Phil. 3:15). The Father, then embodies all the distinctiveness of deity in His Being – *Self-sufficient, Self-conscious, Self-determined and Self-existent* (Ex. 3:13, 14), *Life* (Jn. 5:26) and *Light* (1 Jn. 1:5); *Nature– Infinite Spirit* (Jn. 4:23-24) and yet *Personal* (Ps. 94:9, 10); *Essence or Form – distinct in the One Indivisible Godhead in three co-equal, co-eternal Divine Persons* (Deut. 6:4; Matt. 28:19) but yet clearly seen and revealed in the *Incarnation of the Son and the Holy Spirit of promise* (Matt. 1:18; 3:16, 17; 28:19; Lk. 1:31-35; Jn. 8:12-19; 14:9-11, 15-26; Acts 2:33; Rom. 8:9-11; 2 Cor. 1:20-22; 13:14; Eph. 1:3-14; 3:14-19; 1 Pet. 1:2; 1 Jn. 5:6-8; Rev. 1:4-6; 5:5-10); and *Attributes - Omnipotent* (Deut. 6:4; Job 42:2; Is. 46:9, 10; Rev. 19:6), *Omnipresent* (Ps. 139:7-12; 147:5), *Omniscient* (Job 42:2; Is. 46:9, 10; Acts 5:4, 5), *Immutable* (Mal. 3:6; Heb. 13:8; Js. 1:17), *Eternal* (Ex. 3:14; Deut. 33:27; Ps. 90:2), *Perfect Love* (1 Jn. 4:8), etc.

The being, nature and character, essence and attributes of the Father must be observable in the distinctive functions of each member of the Godhead (Matt. 28:19; 2 Cor. 13:14; Eph. 3:14-19; 1 Pet. 1:2). The Father holds the pre-eminence as God (Hebrew: *Elohim*; Greek: *Theos*) in the Godhead not only in the Creator of the Universe (Gen. 1:1, 4-28; 2:4, 7; Ps 8:3; 104:30; 139:13; Is. 45:12, 18; Rev. 4:11). He is also the Owner (Ps. 24:1; 50:10; 97:5; 104:24-30), Preserver and Sustainer (Ps. 36:6), Ruler and Governor (Ps. 66:7), Judge (Gen. 18:25), Provider (Gen. 8:22) and Redeemer (Gen. 1:2-3; 3:9-15; Ex. 3:4-8; 6:2-5; Eph. 3:14, 15) of the whole.

His Identity

The Father is God, who is revealed by the Son as the 'Father' (Matt. 23:9; Jn. 1:18; 6:27-29, 33, 69; 14:6, 9-11, 16; 15:26; 20:17, 21). The Father is severally revealed in the New Testament as the one true God (1 Cor. 8:4, 6; 1 Thess. 1:9) and the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ (Eph. 1:3, 7; 2:4; 3:14).

His Functions

1. He is the Master Builder, Originator, Creator and Sustainer who sent His Son to die on the Cross for our sins (Gen. 1:1; Neh. 9:21; Ps. 127; Ps. 55:22; Matt. 1:21; Lk. 2:1f; Jn. 1:29; 3:16; 14:1-6)
2. He is the source and giver of all life (Jn. 5; 6)

3. He is the just and justifier of all who believe in His Son, Jesus Christ (Jn. 3:16-18; Rom. 3:26)
4. He gave the Spirit to the Son and the Church (Gen 1:1; Neh. 9:21; Ps 127; Ps 55:22; Matt. 3:16; Lk. 24:49; Jn. 3:34; 35; 14:16, 26)
5. He has ultimately given all things to His Son Jesus, including all authority (Matt. 28:18; Phil. 2:11), judgment (Acts 10:42; Rom. 2:16) and rule (Ps. 110:1; 1 Cor. 15:24; Rev. 11:15-17)

2. The Son

The Son is usually called the second Person of the Godhead, not because He is second in command but maybe on human theological assumptions of His obedience to the Father for the sake of our salvation (Matt. 28:19; 1 Cor. 11:3; Heb. 5:5-10; Rev. 4:1-11; 5:6-10; 19:1-16). There is equality and eternity of God in the Godhead (Matt. 28:19; 2 Cor. 13:14; Eph. 3:14-19; 1 Pet. 1:2).

His Identity

The Son is God, who became the God – man, Jesus Christ (Jn. 1:1; 14; 8:58-59; 10:30; 14:9; 20:28; Rom. 9:5; Phil. 2:6-8; 1 Tim. 2:5; Tit. 2:13).

His Functions

1. He is the Creator and the Mediator of all things (Jn. 1:3; Col. 1:16; 2 Tim. 2:5).
2. He is the Sustainer and Upholder of everything (Col. 1:17; Heb. 1:3).
3. He forgives sin, gives life, and is the coming Judge and King (Matt. 9:2-6; Lk. 7:47, 48; Jn. 6:39-40; 11:25; Acts 10:42, 43; 2 Tim. 4:1; 1 Jn. 5:11-12).
4. He is the baptizer in the Holy Spirit (Matt. 3:11; Acts 1:5; 2:33; 11:15).
5. He gives Eternal life (Jn. 10:28; 17:2).
6. He is the Head and Governor of the Church (Is. 9:6; Eph. 1:22-23; 4:8-16).

3. THE HOLY SPIRIT

The Holy Spirit is usually called the third Person of the Godhead, not because He is third in command but maybe on human theological assumptions of His obedience to the Father and the Son for the sake of our salvation (Matt. 28:19; Jn. 14:15-26; 16:7-15; Acts 2:33; 5:29-32; 1 Jn. 3:23, 24; 4:12-16; Rev. 1:4-6). There is equality and eternity of God in the Godhead (Matt. 28:19; 2 Cor. 13:14; Eph. 3:14-19; 1 Pet. 1:2).

His Identity

The Holy Spirit, **who is the Spirit of God**, bears the name of Deity hence He is also God (Gen 1:2; Jn. 4:24; 15:26; Acts 2:33; 5:3, 4; 1 Cor. 3:16; 2 Cor. 3:17). He is a perfect Person.

His Personality

He has an intellect (1 Cor. 2:10-11).

He has emotions (Is. 63:10; Acts 5:3; 6:9; Rom. 15:30; Eph. 4:30; Heb. 10:29).

He has a will (Acts 16:6; 1 Cor. 12:11).

Masculine pronouns are used for Him (Jn. 16:13).

His Functions

1. He is involved in creation (Gen. 1:2; Job 33:4; Ps. 104:30).
2. He convicts (Jn. 16:8).
3. He regenerates (Jn. 3:5, 6; Tit. 3:5).
4. He teaches (Jn. 14:26; 16:13; 1 Jn. 2:20-27).
5. He guides (Jn. 16:13; Acts 8:29).
6. He prays and intercedes within believers (Rom. 8:26, 27)
7. He restrains (Acts 16:7-8).
8. He appoints (Acts 20:28).
9. He calls (Acts 13:21).
10. He comforts (Jn. 14:16, 26).
11. He imparts spiritual gifts (1 Cor. 12:7-11).
12. He leads (Matt. 4:1; Rom. 8:14).
13. He gives power for service (Acts 1:8).
14. He sanctifies (1 Cor. 6:11; 2 Thess. 2:13).
15. He enlightens (2 Tim. 3:16, 17; Jn. 14:26).
16. He searches (1 Cor. 2:9-11).
17. He testifies (Jn. 15:26)
18. He lifts up or glorifies the Son (Jn. 16:14).
19. He directs people to Jesus and makes Him real (Jn. 15:26; Acts 5:32)

Emblems/Symbols of the Holy Spirit

The nature, character, and functions of the Holy Spirit permit His being symbolized as:

Wind—Ezek. 37:5f; Jn. 3:8; Acts 2:2

Fire—Is. 4:4; Matt. 3:11 c.f. Lk. 3:16; Acts 2:3

Water—Is. 44:2-3; Ez. 47:1-9; Jn. 7:37-39

Seal— 2 Cor. 1:21, 22; Eph. 1:13-14; 4:30

Wine— Amos 9:13; Mk. 2:22

Oil—1 Sam. 16:12-13; Lk. 4:18; 1 Jn. 2:20

Dove—Mk. 1:10; Lk. 3:22

Dew—Ps. 133:1-3; Hos. 14:5

Clothing – Lk. 24:49

Breadth – Job 32:8; 33:4; Is. 42:6; Ezek. 37:9; Jn. 20:22.

Other Attributes: As the Spirit of God, the Holy Spirit may be called:

Spirit of Wisdom (Is. 11:2; Eph. 1:17)

Spirit of Revelation (Eph. 1:17)
Spirit of Knowledge (Is. 11:2)
Spirit of Counsel and of Might (Is. 11:2)
Spirit of Burning and Judgment (Is. 4:4)
The Breadth of the Almighty (Job 32:8; 33:4)
The Spirit of Christ (Rom. 8:9)
The Spirit of Jesus (Acts 16:6, 7)
The Spirit of His Son (Gal. 4:6)
The Spirit of the Lord (2 Cor. 3:17)
The Lord, the Spirit (2 Cor. 3:18)
The Spirit of the fear of the Lord (Is. 11:2)
The Spirit of glory (1 Pet. 4:14)
The Spirit of grace (Heb. 10:29)
The Spirit of grace and supplication (Zech.12:10)
The Spirit of Life (Rom. 8:2)
The Eternal Spirit (Heb. 9:14)
The Spirit of Holiness (Matt. 1:20; Rom. 1:4)
The seven Spirits (of God) (Rev. 1:4; 3:1; 4:5; 5:6)