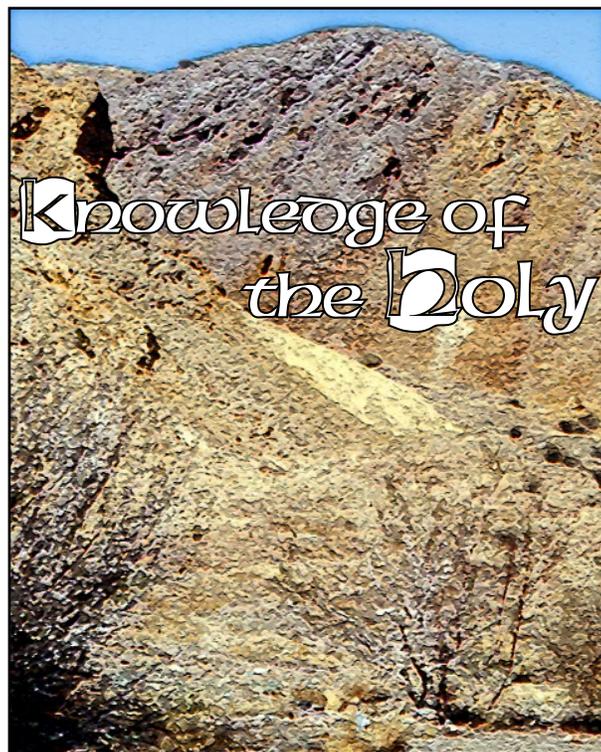


The Godhead, comprised of God the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, is—if it had been invented by someone else—a marvelous creation. It is a supernatural, all-powerful, three-legged stool: all three parts are required for it to fulfill its intended purpose.



making it work

Now He who establishes us with you in Christ and anointed us is God, who also sealed us and gave us the Spirit in our hearts as a pledge.
2 Corinthians 1:21-22

BUT, OF COURSE, THE GODHEAD was *not* invented by someone else. To be clear, it was not created at all, but always has been, and always will be.

I say, "O my God, do not take me away
in the midst of my days,
Your years are throughout all generations.
Of old You founded the earth,
And the heavens are the work of Your hands.
Even they will perish, but You endure;
And all of them will wear out like a garment;
Like clothing You will change them
and they will be changed.
But You are the same,
And Your years will not come to an end."
Psalm 102:24-27

While it is true that no third party created God, we can still marvel at His design, for His relationship with man does indeed depend on all parts of Him-

self. Certainly God the Father, majestic on His eternal throne, is critical to the plan. From Him emanates everything else; He is in charge. But then, in His curious wisdom, God chose to create and then live with man. Critical to that relationship was God the Son, Jesus Christ. The Son incarnate was necessary for at least two reasons: First, He had to die for man's sins. To accomplish this He had to be present on earth in man's flesh. Second, He had to *show* Himself as God in flesh so as to "put meat on" God (the meaning of the word incarnate)—to make Him more real and accessible to small-minded man.

Still that was not enough; the stool would not stand on just two legs. For the members of the Godhead to live with man they must add God the Holy Spirit, who serves in many capacities: counselor,

comforter, interpreter, guide, intercessor, goad—all of which could be lumped together under the title, "Implementer." The Holy Spirit ministers between God and man to implement the eternal plan of his salvation. The Spirit makes it all work.

Because He is generous, God has given us a number of ways to, for example, commune with Him. Yet each way, as perfect as it is in itself, when used by imperfect man must be facilitated by the work of the Holy Spirit.

God has given us His written word. We are to read it, to study it, to cherish it as God's final and authoritative statement on Himself—His history, His ideas and methods, His timeless plan for man's salvation. Yet without the abiding ministry of the Spirit, it is just words on

a page. Without the Spirit, God's word is just another book on the shelf: it says the same things, but unregenerate man cannot digest it as He intended.

For the word of the cross is foolishness to those who are perishing, but to us who are being saved it is the power of God.

1 Corinthians 1:18

The Spirit in the believer converts the written words into understandable, digestible truths that have the power to inform, to teach, to chastise—to actually change a life.

"I have many more things to say to you, but you cannot bear them now. But when He, the Spirit of truth, comes, He will guide you into all the truth; for He will not speak on His own initiative, but whatever He hears, He will speak; and He will disclose to you what is to come. He will glorify Me, for He will take of Mine and will disclose it to you."

John 16:12-14

God has given us prayer, by which we can speak and listen to God with our lips and our ears, with our mind and our heart. Following the example of Christ, we are to spend much time on our knees, alone, telling the Father everything that is on our hearts and listening for His still, small voice. Yet, again, the Spirit is essential to such communion. He is the one who gathers up all our stray and unintelligible mutterings and translates them into the language of heaven. Then He does the same in reverse. He takes the holy speech from the throne and translates it into the baser dialect of man so that we might hear and understand the Father's reply.

In the same way the Spirit also helps our weakness; for we do not know how to pray as we should, but the Spirit Himself intercedes for us with

groanings too deep for words; and He who searches the hearts knows what the mind of the Spirit is, because He intercedes for the saints according to the will of God.

Romans 8:26-27

God has given us worship, with which we can honor and adore Him. In this, another form of prayer, we tell (and show) God the Father how much we love and revere Him; we call out His attributes—the qualities that make God unique; and we remind ourselves how much higher and holier He is than redeemed man. Yet it is the Holy Spirit who takes our feeble devotion and sculpts it into an aroma sweet and acceptable to the nostrils of God.

"But an hour is coming, and now is, when the true worshipers will worship the Father in spirit and truth; for such people the Father seeks to be His worshipers. God is spirit, and those who worship Him must worship in spirit and truth."

John 4:23-24

*Come, Holy Spirit, heavenly Dove,
With all Thy quickening powers;
Kindle a flame of sacred love
In these cold hearts of ours.*

*In vain we tune our formal songs,
In vain we strive to rise;
Hosannas languish on our tongues,
And our devotion dies.*

*Dear Lord, and shall we ever live
At this poor dying rate?
Our love so faint, so cold to Thee,
And Thine to us so great!*

*Come, Holy Spirit, heavenly Dove,
With all Thy quickening powers;
Come, shed abroad a Saviour's love,
And that shall kindle ours.*

Isaac Watts

(continued...)

