

Series: *Christianity vs. Mormonism*

Title: "Mormonism vs. The Holy Spirit"

Speaker: Dr. Paul M. Elliott

Original Air Date: Week of 12/9/2012

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Today's broadcast is number five in our series titled *Christianity vs. Mormonism*. We are presenting this series of messages because Mormonism has become a threat, not merely to those who are lost and without Christ, but Mormonism has also become a clear and present danger to the Evangelical church itself.

We live in a time when even many men who are recognized as Evangelical leaders have demonstrated a serious lack of discernment concerning the great differences between the cult of Mormonism which leads souls to Hell, and authentic Biblical Christianity, which leads soul to eternal life in Christ.

If we were to say that there is a theme verse for this series of messages, it would be First John chapter four, verse one: "Beloved, do not believe every spirit, but test the spirits, whether they are of God; because many false prophets have gone out into the world." And so, we need to ask essential questions about Mormonism or any other group that claims to be Christian. We need to put Mormonism to the test of Scripture. That is what we have been doing, and here is what we have seen thus far.

We have seen that Mormonism, first of all, rejects the authority of the Bible. Mormonism adds to Holy Scripture, takes away from it, denies it, and twists it. Mormonism stands in direct opposition to the authentic Word of God.

We have also seen that Mormonism perverts the Biblical doctrine of God. Mormonism perverts the doctrine of God the Father, and also the doctrine of God the Son. In our last message, we saw that Mormonism denies the virgin birth of

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Christ, and denies that the birth of Jesus was the visible incarnation of the eternal God. We have seen that Mormonism replaces the God of the Bible with a set of pagan monstrosities. Mormonism teaches many gods, and Mormonism teaches that all these gods began as sinful human beings who brought about their own salvation.

Today we are going to continue asking essential questions about the Mormon doctrine of God. The next essential question we must ask is this: What does Mormonism teach about the Holy Spirit, and how does that teaching compare with the doctrine that we find in the authentic Word of God?

What Does Mormonism Teach About the Holy Spirit?

I have mentioned several times in this series that you do not need to become an expert on all the details of Mormonism in order to understand that you need to reject it on the authority of the Word of God. And so as we look at Mormonism's false doctrine of the Holy Spirit, we are only going to cover the essential points – those points that quickly reveal to us that the so-called "Holy Spirit" of Mormonism is, once again, a pagan substitute for the authentic God of the Bible.

The most notable thing about Mormon teaching regarding the Holy Spirit is this: You will find a great deal of confusion and contradiction in it. For example, you will find, on the one hand, that Mormonism teaches that God is not a spirit and that God must have a material essence – God must have a body. For example, they teach that their "Father God" has a body while Scripture declares that He

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does not. But while Mormonism teaches on the one hand that a god must have a body, on the other hand you will find Mormon teachings which say that the being they call the Holy Spirit does not have a body.

On one hand, you will find Mormon teachings that the Holy Spirit is a person. But on the other hand, you will find other Mormon theological writings which say that what they call "the Holy Spirit" is merely – and I am quoting one of their theologians now – he says that the Holy Spirit is a "divine substance, fluid, or essence" – in other words, the being they call the "Holy Spirit" as an impersonal force. You will find many Mormon writings, perhaps the majority of Mormon theological writings over the history of their cult, referring to the "Holy Spirit" as "it" – as a neuter object, and not as a masculine person.

You will also find a mass of contradictions in Mormon teaching about the supposed role of the being they call the "Holy Spirit" in what they call "salvation." In fact, I think it is accurate to say that the doctrine of this counterfeit "Holy Spirit" is one of the most confused and contradictory areas in all of Mormon teaching.

Now in light of this, let me remind you of something I said in our last message. I mentioned that in dealing with Mormons, you will find that it is very, very difficult to have a meaningful conversation about their theology. That is because they have redefined the meanings of all the major Biblical terms so that they fit Mormon thinking. If you as a Bible-believing Christian do not understand this, it will be easy for you to think that when a Mormon speaks of the Holy Spirit, that

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he is using that term as the Bible defines it, when in fact a Mormon is not speaking of God the Holy Spirit as taught in Scripture at all.

A Mormon may also tell you that the Holy Spirit is part of the Trinity, but this is also a deception, because Mormonism has also redefined the Trinity. The Lord willing, we are going to discuss Mormon false teaching on the doctrine of the Trinity on our next broadcast.

If you don't understand that Mormons use very different and very wrong meanings for the terms found in the Bible, you can be easily deceived. And today, many people in Evangelical churches are being deceived by Mormonism on this very point. Mormon missionaries come to their doors and speak of the "Holy Spirit." And so these Evangelicals automatically think that the Mormon is talking about the third person of the Godhead, as He is set forth in the Bible. And that is the lie the Mormon missionary wants you to believe.

I think it is worth noting that this is the same kind of confusion about the doctrine of the Holy Spirit that leads many Christians into the snares and deceptions of the charismatic movement. The charismatic movement is also a cult, and the charismatic movement also un-Biblically redefines the nature and work of the Holy Spirit.

Dear friends, in order to test the spirits we must have a firm grasp of the Spirit of truth. The doctrine of the Holy Spirit is not merely a technicality. It is essential Christian truth. To believe in the God of the Bible is to believe in God the Holy Spirit as He is taught in the Bible. And so, I want to spend the remainder of this

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broadcast presenting what the Bible actually teaches about God the Holy Spirit, in contrast to the false teachings of Mormonism.

What Does the Bible Teach About the Holy Spirit?

Now, in the next few minutes I am going to draw your attention to a large number of Scripture passages. There are many more passages I would like to present to you, but because of the limits of our broadcast time I cannot present them all. But if you would like to look at a more comprehensive presentation of the doctrine of God the Holy Spirit, let me recommend two free teaching resources that you will find on our website, at teachingtheword.org.

You can access both of these free resources by going to the search page on our website. Let me give you the names of these two resources. The first one is titled *How Do We Know That the Holy Spirit is God?* The second one is titled *How Do We Know That the Holy Spirit is a Person?* In those two resources, you will find a large collection of Scripture references that teach the authentic and orthodox doctrine of God the Holy Spirit. We will repeat this information at the end of this broadcast.

"In the Beginning..."

Now, as we consider what the Bible teaches about God the Holy Spirit, let us begin at the beginning. Scripture clearly teaches that the Holy Spirit exists, and

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that the Holy Spirit is God. Scripture declares the Holy Spirit to be the Spirit of God in the very first words of the book of Genesis:

In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth. The earth was without form, and void; and darkness was on the face of the deep. And the Spirit of God was hovering over the face of the waters. (Genesis 1:1-2)

Scripture declares that God the Holy Spirit is eternally existent. In Hebrews 9:14 He is spoken of as "the eternal Spirit." Once again, this is not a being who began as a man and became a god. God the Holy Spirit is now God, has always been God, and will always be God – unchanged and unchanging.

Notice also the great statement we find in Romans chapter eight, beginning at verse nine. Here the Spirit is spoken of as God. Furthermore, He is spoken of in relation to both the God the Father and the God Son, and also in His relation to the believer. Romans chapter eight, beginning at verse nine:

But you [the believer in Jesus Christ] are not in the flesh but in the Spirit, if indeed the Spirit of God dwells in you. Now if anyone does not have the Spirit of Christ, he is not His. And if Christ is in you, the body is dead because of sin, but the Spirit is life because of righteousness.

But if the Spirit of Him who raised Jesus from the dead dwells in you, He who raised Christ from the dead will also give life to your mortal bodies through His Spirit who dwells in you.

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Therefore, brethren, we are debtors — not to the flesh, to live according to the flesh. For if you live according to the flesh you will die; but if by the Spirit you put to death the deeds of the body, you will live. For as many as are led by the Spirit of God, these are sons of God. (Romans 8:9-14)

The Spirit Possesses Divine Attributes

Scripture also declares that the Holy Spirit is God and is a person by declaring to us that the Holy Spirit possesses Divine attributes. Psalm 139 declares that God the Holy Spirit is omnipresent – present everywhere. The psalmist says,

Where can I go from Your Spirit? Or where can I flee from Your presence? If I ascend into heaven, You [God the Holy Spirit] are there; if I make my bed in Hell, behold, You [God the Holy Spirit] are there. If I take the wings of the morning, and dwell in the uttermost parts of the sea, even there Your hand shall lead me, and Your right hand shall hold me. (Psalm 139:7-10)

Jesus spoke of this same attribute of the Holy Spirit when He promised the Spirit to believers in John chapter fourteen. Jesus said,

And I will pray the Father, and He will give you another Helper, that He may abide with you forever — the Spirit of truth, whom the world cannot receive, because it neither sees Him nor knows Him...

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And there, dear friends, is the condemnation of Mormonism in Jesus' own words: They cannot receive the Spirit of truth because they neither see the true Spirit of God nor know Him. But, Jesus says,

you [the true believer in Christ] know Him, for He [God the Holy Spirit] dwells with you and will be in you. (John 14:16-17)

In Romans chapter one, verse four Paul speaks of the third person of the Godhead as "the Spirit of holiness." This also is a key attribute of deity.

Scripture also declares to us that God the Holy Spirit is life itself, and possesses the ability to give life. John 6:63 – "It is the Spirit who gives life..." Romans 8:2 – "For the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus has made me free from the law of sin and death." Romans 8:10 – "And if Christ is in you, the body is dead because of sin, but the Spirit is life because of righteousness."

The Spirit Performs Divine Works

Furthermore, the works of the Holy Spirit that are attributed to Him in the Bible are divine works – works which only God can do. As we saw in Genesis chapter one, the Holy Spirit was involved in the creation of the universe. As we saw in our last message in the book of Matthew, chapter one, the Holy Spirit brought about the supernatural conception of Christ by the virgin Mary.

God the Holy Spirit has inspired all Scripture. "All Scripture is breathed out by God and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, and for instruction

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in righteousness" (2 Timothy 3:16). "For prophecy never came by the will of man, but holy men of God spoke as they were moved by the Holy Spirit" (2 Peter 1:21).

God the Holy Spirit regenerates those who are saved. John 3:6 – "That which is born of the flesh is flesh, and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit." Titus 3:5 – "Not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to His mercy He saved us, through the washing of regeneration and renewing of [or by] the Holy Spirit..."

God the Holy Spirit makes supernatural intercession for believers. Romans 8:26 – "Likewise the Spirit also helps in our weaknesses. For we do not know what we should pray for as we ought, but the Spirit Himself makes intercession for us with groanings which cannot be uttered."

God the Holy Spirit sanctifies believers. In 2 Thessalonians 2:13, Paul writes this: "But we are bound to give thanks to God always for you, brethren beloved by the Lord, because God from the beginning chose you for salvation through sanctification by the Spirit and belief in the truth..." First Peter chapter one, verse two declares that those who are in Christ are "elect according to the foreknowledge of God the Father, in sanctification of the Spirit..."

"Another Paraclete"

In John chapter fourteen, Jesus tells the disciples that He will soon be leaving the world and returning to Heaven. But, Jesus says, "I will pray the Father, and He

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will give you another Helper, that He may abide with you forever – the Spirit of truth..." (14:16-17).

The Greek word that translated "Helper" (NKJV) or "Comforter" (KJV) in this verse is the word *parakletos*, meaning "one who is called alongside to help." The word that is translated "another" in this verse is *allos*, which means "another of the same kind." God the Holy Spirit is "another Helper" of the same kind as God the Son. The Holy Spirit is God just as Jesus is God.

The Greek word *parakletos* is also used in 1 John 2:1 to describe the intercessory work of the Lord Jesus Christ. John says, "If anyone sins, we have an Advocate (a *parakletos*) with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous." God the Holy Spirit is the believer's Paraclete or Advocate in the world, and God the Son, Jesus Christ, is the believer's Paraclete or Advocate at the Father's right hand.

Masculine Personality

As I mentioned earlier, Mormonism teaches that the Holy Spirit is an impersonal force. It is sad to say that you will even find that kind of false teaching among some who call themselves Evangelicals. But Scripture makes it unmistakably clear that God the Holy Spirit is a person. It is vital for Christians to understand this truth.

The Bible speaks of the Holy Spirit as masculine; as having the attributes of personality; as doing works of personality; and engaging in interactions of

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personality. To seek to reinvent the Holy Spirit as an impersonal force is to deny the plain meaning of the words of the Bible.

The very grammar of the Greek New Testament testifies to the personality of the Holy Spirit. The Greek word for "spirit" in the New Testament is *pneuma*. Now, the word *pneuma* in Greek is neuter in gender – it is neither masculine nor feminine. Normally, in Greek grammar, any word that is substituted for a neuter word would also be in the neuter form – neither masculine nor feminine. But the inspired writers of Scripture consistently violated this standard rule of Greek grammar. They always did it. They substituted masculine nouns and the masculine pronoun (He, Him, His) for the neuter *pneuma*, rather than substituting the neuter word "it." In other words, the Holy Spirit is not an "it". The Holy Spirit is not an impersonal force. The Holy Spirit is a "He" – masculine pronoun. The Holy Spirit is a person.

The Holy Spirit Possesses the Attributes of Personality

Scripture declares the personality of the Holy Spirit in His attributes. Romans 8:27 shows us that God the Holy Spirit has a mind. First Corinthians chapter two shows us that the Holy Spirit is an intellect, and possesses all knowledge. Ephesians 4:30 tells us that God the Holy Spirit has sensibility – that He can be grieved.

Acts chapter sixteen tells us that the Holy Spirit possess a will. We read there that Paul and his associates wanted to go into certain regions of the Roman Empire to preach the Word of God, but "they were forbidden by the Holy Spirit... the Spirit did not permit them" (Acts 16:6-7).

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We often see in the pages of Scripture that the Holy Spirit performs the works of a personality, such as teaching, and testifying, and guiding, and convicting, and comforting, and also commanding and commissioning.

We also see the Holy Spirit having interactions with man that denote personality. The Holy Spirit can be sinned against, can be grieved, can be resisted or can be obeyed, can be blasphemed, and can be lied to. Ananias and Sapphira lied to the Holy Spirit in Acts chapter five. And Peter said to Ananias, "You have not lied to men, but [you have lied] to God" (5:4).

The Doctrine of the Holy Spirit Is Vital

Dear friends, the Biblical doctrine of the Holy Spirit is essential Christian truth. There could be no Bible, no authentic Word of God, without the inspiration of the Holy Spirit. There is no salvation without regeneration by the Holy Spirit. There is no preparation for this life and for the life to come without sanctification by the Holy Spirit. There is no help for the Christian in this world without the comfort of the Holy Spirit.

To believe in the God of the Bible is to believe in God the Holy Spirit. To not believe in the Holy Spirit as He is declared in Scripture, is to not believe in the God of the Bible. This is serious business.

Any individual or church that denies or diminishes the person and work of the Holy Spirit teaches a doctrine of God that is contrary to Scripture, and substitutes

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a false god. And that is exactly what Mormonism does. Bible-believing Christians can have no part in this.

And as we continue, the Lord willing, on our next broadcast, we are going to see that the same thing is true concerning the doctrine of the Trinity. Once again, this is essential Christian doctrine. And once again, we are going to see that Mormonism denies and distorts the doctrine of the Trinity by daring to redefine the terms. I hope you will join us for that very important message.

About the Broadcast

The Scripture-Driven Church airs each week across the United States and around the world. Our goal is that of the Great Commission: to preach the Gospel to the world, and to equip believers to stand upon and live by the sole authority of God's Word, to the glory of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ.

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