

What is the Holy Spirit?

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Introduction

In his book “God the Trinity” (Malcolm B. Yarnell III, B&H Academic, 2016), Yarnell conceded on the opening page of his Prologue that according to a recent survey of evangelical Christians “more than half claimed the Holy Spirit is a force and not a personal being.” And this has proven to be the case in my own experience when hearing people’s view of the Holy Spirit. Most don’t believe it’s a personal being. Albeit they don’t know what it really is, just that they’re sure what it really is not.

These same people, however, worship in Trinitarian churches. Likely many of them never thinking through the implications that if the Holy Spirit isn’t a person then there is no Trinity and their worship is problematic. It was the study of the Scriptures about the Holy Spirit that convinced me it’s not a person, therefore calling into question the entire doctrine of the Trinity. Learning the truth about the Holy Spirit became the springboard for me also learning the truth about the Father and the Son.

I was a Trinitarian for almost 30 years. But fearing God, I had to follow the Scriptural evidence where it leads and it led me out of Trinitarianism. I can assure you it wasn’t an easy journey and it still isn’t. I endured much resistance by my pastors and other “Christians” that I had been very close with for many years. But I had to decide who it is that I love the most. Loving God and His Son Jesus Christ the most, I had to painfully part fellowship from those that wouldn’t follow the truth.

The question “What is the Holy Spirit?” isn’t simply an academic matter just to get all of our doctrinal beliefs correct. It’s about the God we worship. Jesus Christ told the woman at the well, “But the hour cometh, and now is, when the true worshippers shall worship the Father **in spirit and in truth: for the Father seeketh such to worship him.** God *is* a Spirit: and they that worship him **must worship *him* in spirit and in truth.**” (Jhn 4:23-24). Because the Father seeks those that will worship Him in spirit and in truth, He sent His Son to teach us the truth about Him. It’s not optional. We “must worship him in spirit and in truth.” We must get it right about the Holy Spirit because it’s a matter of worship.

Introducing God’s breath

The first mention of God’s breath in the Scriptures is within the very first words, “In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth. And the earth was without form, and void; and darkness *was* upon the face of the deep. And **the Spirit [rûah 7307] of God** moved upon the face of the waters.” (Gen 1:1-2). In its initial introduction by God’s revelation through Moses, the *rûah* of God is identified as something belonging to Him as His possession. It’s “the breath of God” or His breath. In the beginning, there wasn’t a person flying over the water like superman! God was blowing from His mouth, His breath across the surface of the water.

The next occurrence of *rûah* in Scripture, it’s the wind, “And they heard the voice of the LORD God walking in the garden in **the cool [rûah 7307] of the day**” (Gen 3:8). Other Bible versions render it, “When the cool

evening breezes were blowing” (NLT), “at the time of the evening breeze” (CSB), “at the breezy time of the day” (NET), “at the breeze of the day” (YLT). There’s no question that *rûah* is simply air, breath, or wind.

The third time *rûah* appears, God Himself is speaking about His breath, “And the LORD said, **My spirit [rûah 7307]** shall not always strive with man” (Gen 6:3). In its introduction it was “the breath of God” and now it’s “My breath.” Therefore, *rûah* is of Himself and from Himself as His possession.

The fourth, fifth, and sixth occurrences of *rûah* are about the breath of life from God in the nostrils of all living beings, “wherein **is the breath [rûah 7307] of life**” (Gen 6:17,7:15), “All in whose **nostrils was the breath [rûah 7307] of life**” (Gen 7:22). This is referring back to the creation of man to life by God breathing into his nostrils, “And the LORD God formed man *of* the dust of the ground, and **breathed into his nostrils the breath of life**; and man became a living soul” (Gen 2:7). We’re even told later in Scripture that the *rûah* into man’s nostrils was God’s breath from His mouth, “By the word of the LORD were the heavens made; and **all the host of them by the breath [rûah 7307] of his mouth**” (Psa 33:6). It’s not a person—it’s God’s breath from His mouth.

In the Old Testament, the translators rendered *rûah* as “breath,” “blast,” or “wind” when the immediate contexts forced it: “And with the **blast [rûah 7307]** of thy nostrils the waters were gathered together” (Exo 15:8); “at the rebuking of the LORD, at the blast of the **breath [rûah 7307]** of his nostrils” (2Sa 22:16); “By the blast of God they perish, and by the **breath [rûah 7307]** of his nostrils are they consumed” (Job 4:9); “by the **breath [rûah 7307]** of his mouth shall he go away” (Job 15:30); “all the host of them by the **breath [rûah 7307]** of his mouth” (Psa 33:6); “he causeth his **wind [rûah 7307]** to blow” (Psa 147:18); “with the **breath [rûah 7307]** of his lips shall he slay the wicked” (Isa 11:4). However, when various contexts allowed the translators a degree of freedom to render *rûah* as something else, they always took that liberty in translating it as “spirit” to imply a personal being. It’s simply a matter of translator bias—rendering statements to comport with their belief that *rûah* is a person.

The *pneuma* of God

The New Testament equivalent of *rûah* is the Greek *pneuma*. Although translated consistently as “spirit,” it’s simply the noun form of the verb *pneo* which means “to blow.” The contexts of all seven occurrences of *pneo* agree: “And the rain descended, and the floods came, and the winds **blew [pneō 4154]** ... And the rain descended, and the floods came, and the winds **blew [pneō 4154]**” (Mat 7:25,27); “And when *ye* see the south wind **blow [pneō 4154]**” (Luk 12:55); “The wind **bloweth [pneō 4154]** where it listeth” (Jhn 3:8); “And the sea arose by reason of a great wind that **blew [pneō 4154]**” (Jhn 6:18); “and hoised up the mainsail to the **wind [pneō 4154]**” (Act 27:40); “that the wind should not **blow [pneō 4154]** on the earth, nor on the sea, nor on any tree” (Rev 7:1). There’s nothing inherent with the word *pneuma* that implies a conscious living personal being. It’s simply breath or wind as its verb counterpart attests. Also, *pneuma* is neuter in gender, not masculine or feminine which is required if referring to a person.

Furthermore, the Greek *pneuma* is where our English “pneumonia”—a respiratory infection in the air sacs of the lungs that causes difficulty in breathing and can be life-threatening—is derived. Also, “pneumology” which is the medical study of the lungs and respiratory organs, and “pneumatics” which is a branch of engineering using systems of compressed air.

Lastly, Jesus Christ Himself is the highest authority with the final word and He defined *pneuma* as breath by literally blowing from His mouth onto His disciples, “And when he had said this, **he breathed on them**, and saith unto them, Receive ye **the Holy Ghost [pneuma 4151]**” (Jhn 20:22). He also likened the new birth, “that which is born of **the Spirit [pneuma 4151] is spirit [pneuma 4151]**” (Jhn 3:6), to the wind blowing, “**The wind [pneuma 4151] bloweth [pneō 4154]** where it listeth, and thou hearest the sound thereof, but canst not tell whence it cometh, and whither it goeth: so is every one that is born of **the Spirit [pneuma 4151]**” (Jhn 3:8). Jesus Christ Himself defined *pneuma* as breath or wind.

Christ is the breath

God the Father, the Son of God, and the apostle Paul all affirmed that Christ is the breath. On the Day of Pentecost, Peter quoted Joel’s prophecy about the event being witnessed that day, “And it shall come to pass in the last days, saith God, **I will pour out [ekcheō 1632] of my Spirit [breath]** upon all flesh: and your sons and your daughters shall prophesy, and your young men shall see visions, and your old men shall dream dreams: And on my servants and on my handmaidens **I will pour out [ekcheō 1632]** in those days **of my Spirit [breath]**; and they shall prophesy” (Act 2:17-18). And Peter concluded his preaching, “Therefore **being by the right hand of God exalted**, and having received of the Father the promise of the Holy Ghost, he hath **shed forth [ekcheō 1632]** this, which ye now see and hear” (Act 2:33). The Greek *ekcheō* means “to pour out” or “shed forth.” Other versions have it more correctly as “poured out” (DBY, NET, NIV, NKJV). Joel’s prophecy wasn’t that God would “pour out” His breath but “pour out of” His breath. God was calling His Son seated at His right hand, “my breath.” To “pour out of my breath” is to “pour out of” His Son. Now, of course, His Son as “my breath” is only figurative.

Referring to the Day of Pentecost, Paul also said that it was God that did the pouring out through Jesus Christ, “Not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to his mercy he saved us, by the washing of regeneration, and renewing of **the Holy Ghost [breath]; Which he shed [ekcheō 1632]** on us abundantly **through Jesus Christ** our Saviour” (Tit 3:4-6), “**he poured out** on us generously **through** Jesus Christ our Savior” (NIV). That God “poured out ... through Jesus Christ” indicates that Jesus Christ is the breath.

Furthermore, God said prior to the flood, “**My spirit [breath]** shall not always strive with man, for that **he also is flesh**” (Gen 6:3). His breath is His only begotten Son. That His breath wouldn’t always strive with man was in His Son becoming flesh as a man.

The Son of God even called Himself “the breath” seven times in His concluding statements to each of the seven churches in Asia, “He that hath an ear, let him hear what **the Spirit [breath] saith unto the churches**” (Rev 2:7,11,17,29, 3:6,13,22). And this was after He had been seated at His Father’s right hand in heaven.

Finally, Paul interchanged the breath with Christ, “**the Spirit [breath]** itself **maketh intercession for us ... It is Christ** that died, yea rather, that is risen again, who is even at the right hand of God, who also **maketh intercession for us**” (Rom 8:26,34). That the breath makes intercession is actually Christ at God’s right hand making intercession. And Paul also told the Corinthians, “Now **the Lord is that Spirit [breath]**” (2Co 3:17).

In what way is Christ the breath?

In His incarnation, the Son of God became fully human in every way just as we are. And in His bodily resurrection from the dead and ascension to be seated in heaven at God's right hand, He remains fully human both now and forever. The term "the Son of man" which Christ used for Himself many times as recorded in the four Gospels, was also used for Him after having been seated at God's right hand in heaven: "I see the heavens opened, and **the Son of man** standing on the right hand of God" (Act 7:56); "And in the midst of the seven candlesticks *one* like unto **the Son of man**" (Rev 1:13); "And I looked, and behold a white cloud, and upon the cloud *one* sat like unto **the Son of man**" (Rev 14:14). Also, Paul called Christ a man in His mediation for us before God, "For *there is* one God, and one mediator between God and men, **the man Christ Jesus**" (1Ti 2:5). The Son of God is fully human. But He *is* the breath in metaphorical equivalence.

God gave all things to His Son: "All things are delivered unto me of my Father" (Mat 11:27), "All power is given unto me in heaven and in earth" (Mat 28:18); "All things are delivered to me of my Father" (Luk 10:22); "The Father loveth the Son, and hath given all things into his hand" (Jhn 3:35); "For the Father judgeth no man, but hath committed all judgment unto the Son" (Jhn 5:22); "Jesus knowing that the Father had given all things into his hands" (Jhn 13:3); "As thou hast given him power over all flesh" (Jhn 17:2); "For he hath put all things under his feet" (1Co 15:27); "And hath put all *things* under his feet" (Eph 1:22); "That at the name of Jesus every knee should bow" (Phl 2:10); "Thou hast put all things in subjection under his feet" (Heb 2:8); "angels and authorities and powers being made subject unto him" (1Pe 3:22).

In giving His Son all things, God gave His Son full agency and proxy over His breath so that it's His decision and prerogative for the breath to dwell in our hearts. This is why God's breath in our hearts is equated with Christ Himself: "Now if any man have not **the Spirit [breath] of Christ**, he is none of his. And if **Christ *be* in you**" (Rom 8:9-10); "Now **the Lord is that Spirit [breath]**: and where the Spirit [*breath*] of the Lord *is*, there *is* liberty" (2Co 3:17); "I am crucified with Christ: nevertheless I live; yet not I, but **Christ liveth in me**" (Gal 2:20); "And because ye are sons, God hath sent forth **the Spirit [breath] of his Son into your hearts**" (Gal 4:6); "to be strengthened with might by his Spirit [*breath*] in the inner man; That **Christ may dwell in your hearts** by faith" (Eph 3:17); "**Christ in you**, the hope of glory" (Col 1:27). That Christ *is* God's breath isn't literal but simply metaphorical.

Jesus was speaking figuratively

John chapters 14-16 is the famous passage where Jesus foretold His disciples about the coming of "the Spirit [*breath*] of truth" (14:17,15:26,16:13), "the Holy Ghost [*breath*]" (14:26). And many times He used personal pronouns for the breath in this passage indicating personhood: "that **he** may abide with you for ever" (14:16); "it seeth **him** not, neither knoweth **him**: but ye know **him**; for **he** dwelleth with you" (14:17); "**he** shall teach you all things" (14:26); "**he** shall testify of me" (15:26); "I will send **him** to you" (16:7); "And when **he** is come, **he** will reprove the world" (16:8); "Howbeit when **he**, the Spirit of truth, is come, **he** will guide you into all truth: for **he** shall not speak of **himself**; but whatsoever **he** shall hear, *that* shall **he** speak: and **he** will shew you things to come" (Jhn 16:13); "**He** shall glorify me: for **he** shall receive of mine" (Jhn 16:14); "**he** shall take of mine" (16:15).

There's a stipulation, however, to what He said. At the conclusion of the passage He said He had been speaking figuratively, "These things have I **spoken unto you in proverbs**: but the time cometh, when I shall no more speak unto you in proverbs, but I shall shew you **plainly** of the Father" (Jhn 16:25). Other Bible versions render it, "in allegories" (DBY), "speaking figuratively" (NIV), "in figurative language" (NKJV), "in figures of speech" (NLT), "in similitudes" (YLT). That's what He said about His own words. But regardless, many use those personal pronouns as "proof" that the breath is an actual person. But those same people taking Him literally here certainly don't take Him literally when He spoke earlier about the breath as "**rivers of living water**. (But this spake he of **the Spirit [breath]**" (Jhn 7:38-39). They take Him figuratively there, but literally here in spite of Him qualifying His own words as figurative.

Within the passage itself, Jesus even indicated He was speaking of Himself as the breath, "but ye know him; for **he dwelleth with you**" (Jhn 14:17). His disciples knew the breath because He had been living with them the past three years as they had traveled and ministered together. And that the coming breath would be Himself coming, "I will not leave you comfortless: **I will come to you**" (14:18), "I go away, and **come again unto you**" (14:28).

Also, Jesus told His disciples that He still had many things to teach them, including about things to come, "**I have yet many things to say unto you**, but ye cannot bear them now. Howbeit when he, **the Spirit [breath]** of truth, is come, he will guide you into all truth: for he shall not speak of himself; but whatsoever he shall hear, *that* shall he speak: and **he will show you things to come**" (Jhn 16:13). These "things to come" were the things contained in the final writing of the Scriptures, "**The Revelation of Jesus Christ**, which God gave unto him, **to show** unto his servants things which must shortly **come to pass**" (Rev 1:1). True to His words, Revelation isn't just *telling* but *showing* through visions the events that are to come. And "The Revelation of Jesus Christ" is what "God gave unto him" as He had told His disciples, "whatsoever **he shall hear, that shall he speak.**" Christ is the breath and what He heard from God is what He spoke.

Finally, although Christ used masculine pronouns for the breath several times in this passage, in this one statement leading into the passage, He used a neuter pronoun for the breath three times, "**Even the Spirit [breath]** of truth; whom the world cannot receive, because it seeth **him [autos 846, neuter]** not, neither knoweth **him [autos 846, neuter]**: but ye know **him [autos 846, neuter]**" (Jhn 14:17). But this verse is incorrectly translated with masculine pronouns. Paul used the same neuter pronoun for the breath which was translated correctly, "**The Spirit [breath] itself [autos 846, neuter]** beareth witness with our spirit [*breath*]" (Rom 8:16), "**the Spirit [breath] itself [autos 846, neuter]** maketh intercession for us" (Rom 8:26). Christ's use of a neuter pronoun for the breath indicates that it's truly not a person but that He had simply been speaking figuratively as He said.

Jesus Christ is our Advocate before the Father

An advocate is one that intercedes and pleads on behalf of another. Jesus Christ is our Advocate, Interceder, or Mediator before the Father at His right hand: "Sit thou at my right hand" (Psa 110:1); "Hereafter shall the Son of man sit on the right hand of the power of God" (Luk 22:69); "being by the right hand of God exalted" (Act 2:33); "who is even at the right hand of God" (Rom 8:34); "set *him* at his own right hand" (Eph 1:20); "Christ sitteth on the right hand of God" (Col 3:1); "sat down on the right hand of the Majesty on high" (Heb 1:3); "who is set on the right hand of the throne of the Majesty in the heavens" (Heb 8:1); "sat down on the

right hand of God” (Heb 10:12); “is set down at the right hand of the throne of God” (Heb 12:2); “is on the right hand of God” (1Pe 3:22); “am set down with my Father in his throne” (Rev 3:21).

It was His advocacy at the Father’s right hand that Jesus was foretelling His disciples in John 14-16: “And I will ask the Father, and he will give you another **advocate [paraklētos 3875]** to help you and be with you forever” (Jhn 14:16 NIV); “But the **Advocate [paraklētos 3875], the Holy Spirit [breath]**, whom the Father will send in my name” (Jhn 14:26 NIV); “When the **Advocate [paraklētos 3875]** comes, whom I will send to you from the Father—the **Spirit [breath]** of truth who goes out from the Father” (Jhn 15:26 NIV); “Unless I go away, the **Advocate [paraklētos 3875]** will not come to you” (Jhn 16:7 NIV). As their Advocate, His disciples wouldn’t ask Him but ask the Father in His name, “And in that day **ye shall ask me nothing**. Verily, verily, I say unto you, Whatsoever **ye shall ask the Father in my name**, he will give *it* you. **Hitherto have ye asked nothing in my name**: ask, and ye shall receive, that your joy may be full.” (Jhn 16:23-24). Up to this point He had always gone to the Father for them, “At that day **ye shall ask in my name**: and I say **not** unto you, that I will **pray the Father for you**” (Jhn 16:26). But after being seated at God’s right hand advocating, interceding, and mediating for them, they would go to the Father directly in prayer.

Although Christ spoke to His disciples figuratively about the Advocate, “These things have I spoken unto you in proverbs” (Jhn 16:25), John later understood plainly that He had been speaking of Himself, “And if any man sin, we have **an advocate [paraklētos 3875]** with the Father, **Jesus Christ the righteous**” (1Jo 2:1). He is our Advocate, Interceder, or Mediator before God: “the Spirit [breath] itself **maketh intercession for us** ... who is even at the right hand of God, who also **maketh intercession for us**” (Rom 8:26,34); “For *there is* one God, and one **mediator** between God and men, the man Christ Jesus” (1Ti 2:5); “he ever liveth to make **intercession** for them” (Heb 7:25); “he is the **mediator** of a better covenant” (Heb 8:6); “he is the **mediator** of the new testament” (Heb 9:15); “Jesus the **mediator** of the new covenant” (Heb 12:24).

The breath of God is His possession

The first two mentions of the breath in Scripture, it belonged to God as His possession, “And **the Spirit [rûah 7307] of God** moved upon the face of the waters” (Gen 1:2), “And the LORD said, **My spirit [rûah 7307]** shall not always strive with man” (Gen 6:3). And many, many more times in Scripture the breath is said to belong to God: “Can we find *such a one* as this *is*, a man in whom **the Spirit [breath] of God is?**” (Gen 41:38); “And I have filled him with **the spirit [breath] of God**” (Exo 31:3); “And he hath filled him with **the spirit [breath] of God**” (Exo 35:31); “would God that all the LORD’S people were prophets, *and* that the LORD would put **his spirit [breath]** upon them!” (Num 11:29); “and **the spirit [breath] of God** came upon him” (Num 24:2); “And **the Spirit [breath] of the LORD** came upon him” (Jdg 3:10); “But **the Spirit [breath] of the LORD** came upon Gideon” (Jdg 6:34); “Then **the Spirit [breath] of the LORD** came upon Jephthah” (Jdg 11:29); “And **the Spirit [breath] of the LORD** began to move him at times” (Jdg 13:25); “And **the Spirit [breath] of the LORD** came mightily upon him” (Jdg 14:6); “And **the Spirit [breath] of the LORD** came upon him” (Jdg 14:19); “and **the Spirit [breath] of the LORD** came mightily upon him” (Jdg 15:14); “And **the Spirit [breath] of the LORD** will come upon thee” (1Sa 10:6); “and **the Spirit [breath] of God** came upon him” (1Sa 10:10); “And **the Spirit [breath] of God** came upon Saul” (1Sa 11:6); “and **the Spirit [breath] of the LORD** came upon David from that day forward” (1Sa 16:13); “But **the Spirit [breath] of the LORD** departed from Saul” (1Sa 16:14); “**the Spirit [breath] of God** was upon the messengers of Saul” (1Sa 19:20); “and **the Spirit [breath] of God** was upon him also” (1Sa 19:23); “**The Spirit [breath] of the LORD** spake by me” (2Sa 23:2); “**the Spirit [breath] of the LORD** shall carry thee whither I know not” (1Ki 18:12); “Which way went **the Spirit [breath] of the LORD** from me to

speak unto thee?" (1Ki 22:24); "lest peradventure **the Spirit [breath] of the LORD** hath taken him up" (2Ki 2:16); "And **the Spirit [breath] of God** came upon Azariah the son of Oded" (2Ch 15:1); "Which way went **the Spirit [breath] of the LORD** from me to speak unto thee?" (2Ch 18:23); "came **the Spirit [breath] of the LORD** in the midst of the congregation" (2Ch 20:14); "And **the Spirit [breath] of God** came upon Zechariah the son of Jehoiada the priest" (2Ch 24:20); "By **his spirit [breath]** he hath garnished the heavens" (Job 26:13); "and **the spirit [breath] of God** is in my nostrils" (Job 27:3); "**The Spirit [breath] of God** hath made me" (Job 33:4); "Because they provoked **his spirit [breath]**" (Psa 106:33); "And **the spirit [breath] of the LORD** shall rest upon him" (Isa 11:2); "because **the spirit [breath] of the LORD** bloweth upon it" (Isa 40:7); "Who hath directed **the Spirit [breath] of the LORD**" (Isa 40:13); "**the Spirit [breath] of the LORD** shall lift up a standard against him" (Isa 59:19); "**The Spirit [breath] of the Lord GOD** is upon me" (Isa 61:1); "**the Spirit [breath] of the LORD** caused him to rest" (Isa 63:14); "and now the Lord GOD, and **his Spirit [breath]**, hath sent me" (Isa 48:16); "And **the Spirit [breath] of the LORD** fell upon me" (Eze 11:5); "Afterwards the spirit [breath] took me up, and brought me in a vision by **the Spirit [breath] of God** into Chaldea" (Eze 11:24); "and carried me out in **the spirit [breath] of the LORD**" (Eze 37:1); "is **the spirit [breath] of the LORD** straitened?" (Mic 2:7); "But truly I am full of power by **the spirit [breath] of the LORD**" (Mic 3:8); "and the words which the LORD of hosts hath sent in **his spirit [breath]** by the former prophets" (Zec 7:12); "and he saw **the Spirit [breath] of God** descending like a dove, and lighting upon him" (Mat 3:16); "For it is not ye that speak, but **the Spirit [breath] of your Father** which speaketh in you" (Mat 10:20); "But if I cast out devils by **the Spirit [breath] of God**" (Mat 12:28); "**The Spirit [breath] of the Lord** is upon me" (Luk 4:18); "How is it that ye have agreed together to tempt **the Spirit [breath] of the Lord?**" (Act 5:9); "**the Spirit [breath] of the Lord** caught away Philip" (Act 8:39); "if so be that **the Spirit [breath] of God** dwell in you" (Rom 8:9); "But if **the Spirit [breath] of him** that raised up Jesus from the dead dwell in you, he that raised up Christ from the dead shall also quicken your mortal bodies by **his Spirit [breath]** that dwelleth in you" (Rom 8:11); "For as many as are led by **the Spirit [breath] of God**" (Rom 8:14); "Through mighty signs and wonders, by the power of **the Spirit [breath] of God**" (Rom 15:19); "But God hath revealed *them* unto us by **his Spirit [breath]**" (1Co 2:10); "even so the things of God knoweth no man, but **the Spirit [breath] of God**" (1Co 2:11); "But the natural man receiveth not the things of **the Spirit [breath] of God**" (1Co 2:14); "Know ye not that ye are the temple of God, and *that the Spirit [breath] of God* dwelleth in you?" (1Co 3:16); "and I think also that I have **the Spirit [breath] of God**" (1Co 7:40); "Wherefore I give you to understand, that no man speaking by **the Spirit [breath] of God** calleth Jesus accursed" (1Co 12:3); "and where **the Spirit [breath] of the Lord** is, there is liberty ... are changed into the same image from glory to glory, *even* as by **the Spirit [breath] of the Lord**" (2Co 3:17,18); "to be strengthened with might by **his Spirit [breath]** in the inner man" (Eph 3:16); "And grieve not **the holy Spirit [breath] of God**" (Eph 4:30); "Hereby know ye **the Spirit [breath] of God**" (1Jo 4:2); "and he in us, because he hath given us of **his Spirit [breath]**" (1Jo 4:13).

Since clearly the breath of God belongs to God as His possession, it's not some other personal autonomous being. Moreover, it can't be a co-equal person in a Trinitarian Godhead because then it wouldn't belong to God. It's simply God's own breath from His mouth.

The reason God's breath is holy

The Hebrew adjective *qāḏôš* is translated throughout the Old Testament primarily as "holy" but sometimes as "saint." It means "separated," "divided," or "set apart." God chose His people Israel and separated them from all other people: "For thou *art an holy [qāḏôš 6918] people* unto the LORD thy God: the LORD thy God hath chosen thee to be a special people unto himself, **above all people** that *are* upon the face of the earth" (Deu

7:6); “For thou *art an holy [qāḏōš 6918] people* unto the LORD thy God, and the LORD hath chosen thee to be a peculiar people unto himself, **above all the nations** that *are* upon the earth” (Deu 14:2); “for thou *art an holy [qāḏōš 6918] people* unto the LORD thy God” (Deu 14:21); “And to make thee high **above all nations** which he hath made, in praise, and in name, and in honour; and that thou mayest be an **holy [qāḏōš 6918] people** unto the LORD thy God, as he hath spoken” (Deu 26:19); “The LORD shall establish thee an **holy [qāḏōš 6918] people** unto himself, as he hath sworn unto thee” (Deu 28:9).

In the New Testament, the equivalent of the Hebrew adjective *qāḏōš* is the Greek adjective *hagios* also translated consistently as either “holy” or “saint.” Peter quoted from Moses and used *hagios* for *qāḏōš*, “For I *am* the LORD your God: ye shall therefore sanctify yourselves, and ye shall **be holy [qāḏōš 6918]; for I am holy [qāḏōš 6918]**” (Lev 11:44), “Because it is written, Be ye **holy [hagios 40]; for I am holy [hagios 40]**” (1Pe 1:15-16).

When speaking of God’s people in the New Testament, the translators rendered *hagios* as “saints” rather than “separated” which obscures the identity of the subjects. The saints are simply God’s people, separated or set apart from all other people in the world. Here are just some of the many times *hagios* is used for God’s people: “And the graves were opened; and many bodies of **the saints [hagios 40]** which slept arose” (Mat 27:52); “**thy saints [hagios 40]** at Jerusalem” (Act 9:13); “**the saints [hagios 40]** which dwelt at Lydda” (Act 9:32); “To all that be in Rome, beloved of God, called *to be saints [hagios 40]*” (Rom 1:7); “Distributing to the necessity of **saints [hagios 40]**” (Rom 12:13); “Unto the church of God which is at Corinth, to them that are sanctified in Christ Jesus, called *to be saints [hagios 40]*” (1Co 1:2); “unto the church of God which is at Corinth, with all the **saints [hagios 40]** which are in all Achaia” (2Co 1:1); “Paul, an apostle of Jesus Christ by the will of God, to the **saints [hagios 40]** which are at Ephesus” (Eph 1:1); “Paul and Timotheus, the servants of Jesus Christ, to all the **saints [hagios 40]** in Christ Jesus which are at Philippi” (Phl 1:1); “All the **saints [hagios 40]** salute you” (Phl 4:22); “To the **saints [hagios 40]** and faithful brethren in Christ which are at Colosse” (Col 1:2).

The distinction of God’s people is that they have God’s breath dwelling in their hearts: “But ye are not in the flesh, but in **the Spirit [breath]**, if so be that **the Spirit [breath] of God dwell in you**” (Rom 8:9); “But if **the Spirit [breath]** of him that raised up Jesus from the dead **dwell in you**, he that raised up Christ from the dead shall also quicken your mortal bodies by **his Spirit [breath] that dwelleth in you**” (Rom 8:11); “What? know ye not that your body is the temple of **the Holy Ghost [breath] which is in you**, which ye have of God, and ye are not your own?” (1Co 6:19); “Who hath also sealed us, and given the earnest of **the Spirit [breath] in our hearts**” (2Co 1:22); “And because ye are sons, God hath sent forth **the Spirit [breath] of his Son into your hearts**, crying, Abba, Father” (Gal 4:6); “That good thing which was committed unto thee keep by **the Holy Ghost [breath] which dwelleth in us**” (2Ti 1:14); “And hereby we know that he abideth in us, by **the Spirit [breath] which he hath given us**” (1Jo 3:24).

Since *hagios* means “separated,” then *hagios pneuma* translated consistently as “Holy Spirit” is more accurately “separated breath.” It’s not a holy being or a reverent person as “Holy Spirit” implies. It’s God’s breath in the hearts of His people that separates or sets them apart from all other people. Only God’s people have the hope of eternal life by His breath dwelling in their hearts.

Conclusion

The Hebrew *rûah* and Greek *pneuma* mistranslated throughout Scripture as “spirit” isn’t a personal being but simply air, wind, or breath. When used as a possession of God, it’s God’s breath or the breath of God from His mouth. Jesus Christ even illustrated this to His disciples by breathing from His mouth onto them. But the time He had spoken to them about the breath as if a personal being, He stipulated His own words as figurative. He had been speaking of Himself as our forthcoming Advocate, Intercessor, or Mediator at God’s right hand in heaven. As our Advocate, God gave Him full agency and proxy over His breath so that He decides who will have the breath in their hearts and access to God the Father. It’s in this sense that Christ *is* the breath. He is literally a human being, but metaphorically God’s breath. And the reason the breath is called *hagios* for “separated” many times in the New Testament is because its presence in the hearts of God’s people is what separates them from all other people.

Since *rûah* and *pneuma* is air, wind, or breath and not a personal being, then there is no Trinity of three persons in the Godhead. How then can highly intelligent and educated ministers, pastors, and theologians be wrong about this? People are trusting their souls to these men. If they truly love their flocks, they will take every precaution to get this right for their sakes.