

CatClub: Question 36



1. Recap. Last week we asked where faith comes from, i.e. is faith something we can exercise by ourselves, or is there an alternative explanation? And we learnt that in fact **it is God the Holy Spirit who gives us the gift of faith in the first place.**

Q36 now asks: What do we believe about the Holy Spirit? **Answer:** **That he is God, coeternal with the Father and the Son, and that God grants him irrevocably to all believe.**

Explanation: ‘coeternal’ means ‘eternal in the same way as...’ So, **God the Holy Spirit is eternal** (=having no beginning or end) **in exactly the same way as God the Father and God the Son (Jesus) are eternal.** In addition, the Holy Spirit is not an ‘it’, but a **divine person** who is referred to as ‘he’.

Also: ‘irrevocably’ means ‘without fail’.

2. Investigation

Please look up:

a) (In the New Testament) Matthew chapter 3, verses 16-17. The scene here is the baptism of Jesus, performed by John the Baptist. In these verses we notice that all three persons of the Trinity are present: God the Father, whose voice we hear, God the Son (Jesus), who is being baptised in the River Jordan, and **God the Holy Spirit, who descends from heaven in the form of a dove and rests on Jesus.**

b) (In the New Testament) 2 Corinthians chapter 13, verse 14. At the end of Paul’s second letter to the church at Corinth, he signs off by wishing them grace (=the undeserved favour of God) from all three persons of the Trinity – the Lord Jesus Christ, God (=the Father) and **the Holy Spirit.** Note also that what Paul wishes them is the ‘**fellowship**’ of the Holy Spirit: **this means a spiritual sharing in the life of God and all the benefits of unity with him which are the special work of the Holy Spirit.**

c) (In the New Testament) John chapter 14, verses 16-17. Here Jesus promises his disciples (and therefore all Christians) that **he will send them the Holy Spirit to be with them (and us) in a special way.** The Holy Spirit was given at Pentecost (seven weeks after Jesus’ death and resurrection and after he had ascended to heaven), which you can read about in Acts chapter 2.

>>>Next week’s question: How does the Holy Spirit help us?

This week’s songs:

‘Holy Spirit, Living Breath of God’ <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=xQkxC-AhhVo>

‘Breathe on me, breath of God’ <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=DBrImVdF1Nw>

Matthew 3:16-17

¹⁶ And when Jesus was baptized, immediately he went up from the water, and behold, the heavens were opened to him, and he saw the Spirit of God descending like a dove and coming to rest on him; ¹⁷ and behold, a voice from heaven said, "This is my beloved Son, with whom I am well pleased."

2 Corinthians 13:14

¹⁴ The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ and the love of God and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit be with you all.

John 14:16-17

¹⁶ And I will ask the Father, and he will give you another Helper, to be with you for ever, ¹⁷ even the Spirit of truth, whom the world cannot receive, because it neither sees him nor knows him. You know him, for he dwells with you and will be in you.

Acts 2:1-4

When the day of Pentecost arrived, they were all together in one place. ² And suddenly there came from heaven a sound like a mighty rushing wind, and it filled the entire house where they were sitting. ³ And divided tongues as of fire appeared to them and rested on each one of them. ⁴ And they were all filled with the Holy Spirit and began to speak in other tongues (=unlearned foreign languages) as the Spirit gave them utterance.