

Trinitarians focus on a few scriptures in which the holy spirit is personified, which, when taken literally, make it appear to be an actual spirit person. Let's examine the uses in John of the word *spirit*, wherever it means the holy spirit.



“John bore witness, ‘I saw the Spirit come down from heaven as a dove and it remained on him’” (John 1:32 ESV)

Is the holy spirit a person in the Gospel of John?

The holy spirit is not personified, but said to be “as a dove,” the figure of speech called *simile*, being used here, involving the comparison of one thing with another thing of a different kind. The holy Spirit is referred to by the pronoun **“it.”** **“It”** is not a person. There is no indication of personhood being applied to the holy spirit.

“I did not know him; but he who sent me to baptize in water had told me, ‘The man on whom you see the Spirit come down and rest is the one who is to baptize in Holy Spirit.’” (John 1:33 REB)

The Spirit comes down and “rests” on Jesus. It is obviously not a person. Not only that, Jesus is said to be the one “who is to baptize in Holy Spirit.” The original Greek text has no definite article before “Holy Spirit.” To baptize “in Holy Spirit” is a clear indication the holy spirit is not, and cannot be, a person.

“Jesus answered, ‘In very truth I tell you, no one can enter the kingdom of God without being born from water and spirit” (John 3:5 REB)

Jesus says one must be baptized in both water and holy spirit to enter God's kingdom. Holy spirit cannot be a person, since one is baptized in it.

“Flesh begets flesh, Spirit begets spirit.” (John 3:6 NAB)

Having a spiritual rebirth via holy spirit indicates the holy spirit is not a person.

“The wind blows where it wills; you hear the sound of it, but you do not know where it comes from or where it is going. So is everyone who is born from the Spirit.” (John 3:8 REB)

Being “born from the Spirit” precludes the holy spirit being a person.

“For the one whom God has sent speaks the words of God, for God gives the Spirit without limit.” (John 3:34 NIV)

The description “God gives the Spirit without limit” clearly indicates holy spirit cannot be a person.

"But the hour is coming, and is now here, when the true worshipers will worship the Father in spirit and truth, for the Father is seeking such people to worship him. God is spirit, and those who worship him must worship in spirit and truth." (John 4:23-24 ESV)

Worshippers of God **"must worship him in spirit"**, obviously not a person.

"It is the spirit that gives life; the flesh is useless. The words I spoke to you are spirit and life." (John 6:63 NAB)

The language used here, "the spirit that gives life", and "the words that I have spoken to you are spirit and life", indicate the holy spirit cannot be a person.

"Whoever believes in me, as Scripture has said, rivers of living water will flow from within them.' By this he meant the Spirit, whom those who believed in him were later to receive. Up to that time the Spirit had not been given, since Jesus had not yet been glorified." (John 7:38-39 NIV)

The holy spirit here is likened to water flowing from within a person. Obviously, it cannot be a person.

“I will ask the Father, and he will give you another Advocate to be with you always, the spirit of the truth, which the world cannot accept, because it neither sees nor knows it. But you know it, because it remains with you, and will be in you” (John 14:16,17 NAB)

Notice that **“the spirit”** is referred to as **“it”** three times in these verses. Persons are not called **“it”**. Christians are to be empowered by **“the Advocate”**, which verse 26 says is **“the holy Spirit” (NAB)**, after Jesus returns to heaven. It is also called the “Helper” (verse 16 NASB) in that it enables Christians as a whole to do “greater works than these” (verse 12 NASB).

“The Helper, the Holy Spirit which the Father will send in my place, will teach you everything and remind you of everything that I have told you” (John 14:26 AAT)

The holy spirit is sent by the Father to teach and remind Christians of all that Jesus said. Being ‘sent by the Father,’ the holy spirit cannot be God the Father, nor be equal to him. Jesus said that the the Father will send in his place, so the holy spirit cannot be Jesus.

When examined further, the scriptures Trinitarians try to use to prove the holy spirit is a person turn out to be saying just the opposite.