

Part Two

The Ascending Angels
as Spirit Aspects

Chapter 6

The Trinitarian Breakdown of Holy Spirit Aspects

In the writings of the apostle Paul we find the Holy Spirit described in many ways: Faith, Hope, Love, Freedom, Wisdom, Joy, Peace. All these words indicate aspects of Holy Spirit – various families of angels or states of Awe.

The One and the Many in Christian Theology

The poetry of angels is a device used in the biblical literature to deal with the manyness of our experience of the One God. There is an infinite number of angels, and yet there is only One Final Reality from which each of these angels is a messenger. There is One Awesome Reality occasioning in humans many states of Awe.

Though the apostle Paul uses many terms to describe the Holy response to Eternity, I believe that his main three categories are “Trust,” “Love,” and “Freedom.” Faith, Peace, Rest, and Wisdom can be shown to be aspects of a fully elaborated description of Trust. Strength, Enchantment, Joy, and Compassion can be shown to be aspects of a fully elaborated description of Love. Courage, Decisiveness, Liberation, and Hope can be shown to be aspects of a fully elaborated description of Freedom. Other terms also come into play as we elaborate the many aspects of the one dynamic called “Holy Spirit.”

Three is a special number in Christian heritage. First of all, we see it used to distinguish the three primary aspects of our experience of the One God: God, the Awesome Otherness; God, the Awed humanity; and God, the Awe itself. Holy Spirit is the Awe itself. Holy Spirit is the response of Awe moving from our conscious center through all the layers of our living toward the Awesome Otherness that calls forth the Awe and sustains the entire ramp of relationship with this Eternal Presence. Holy Spirit is the many angels that move up this ramp. In this chapter I want to further explore the inner “logic” of the Trinitarian formula and apply that logic to the differentiation and organization of the many aspects of Holy Spirit – the many states of Awe.

Knowing, Being, and Doing Spirit

Consciousness includes both a passive and active element, both sensitivity and responsiveness, both attention and intention, both knowing and doing. The word “being” can be used to indicate a style of living that holds our knowing and our doing together in some sort of balance or imbalance, some sort of natural flow or fixed pattern. I will use the word “Being” with a capital “B” to indicate the wholeness in which all knowing, doing, and being cohere.

Knowing-being-doing is a unified dynamic of consciousness with three inseparable aspects. When we use the word “knowing” to indicate one third of this knowing-being-doing dynamic, “knowing” does not mean information or rational content. “Knowing,” in this context, means our foundational participation in Reality. This foundational participation may include information or rational content but such content is rooted in a knowing that is deeper than words. The knowing that is joined with being and doing includes knowing the rationally unknowable as well as the rationally knowable. Such knowing means an openness to Reality, a receptiveness of Reality, a willingness to have all one’s treasured rational content contradicted or upended. Consciousness begins with the passive but curious “taking in” of Reality. An amoeba differs from a rock in its ability to “take in” its surroundings and “take in” its internal genetic messages and use this knowing to forge a response that tends toward its comfort and feeding, its survival and the survival of its species. The human species is

much more inclusive in its sensitivities than the amoeba. Knowing, in the human species, is complex and profound beyond the capacities of the human mind to fathom. Furthermore, our knowing of Reality and of ourselves is occluded by the various fixations and rigidities that have become our habits of thinking and living.

Knowing, when allowed to flow naturally, flows into ever-deeper connections with our true being. In this sense, being follows knowing. Progress toward more consciousness and greater authenticity takes the path of moving from ever-more-open knowing into ever-deeper being of our Being. This being of our Being then becomes the foundation out of which our active living proceeds. This is the natural flow of consciousness: to move from knowing to being to doing.

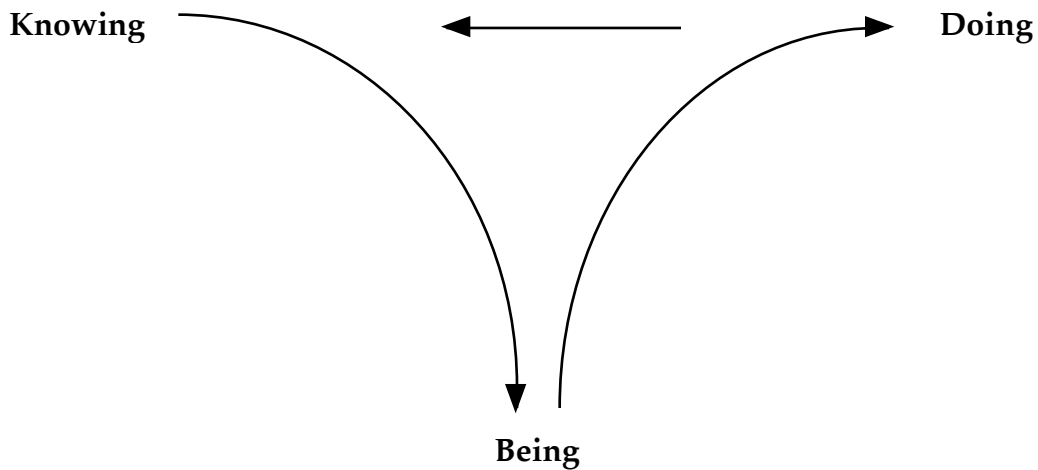
As we do our current state of being our Being we exposes ourselves to further Reality, to fresh expansions of our knowing which then further deepens our being of our Being, which further enriches our doing. Knowing-being-doing-knowing-being-doing is a continuing flow toward an ever-more-open knowing to an ever-deepening being of our Being to an ever-more-effective doing to an ever-more-open knowing to an ever-deepening being of our Being to an ever-more-effective doing . . . as an unending process.

Delusion and inauthentic living come about by reversing the direction of this natural process. Knowing-doing-being-knowing-doing-being is a journey into ever greater delusion and inauthenticity. When we jump from knowing to doing without first being our Being, our action proceeds from the current concepts of our minds rather than from an integrated state of our being. This makes for less effective, less integrated, less meaningful action. In fact, it makes for moralistic, rigid, and malicious action.

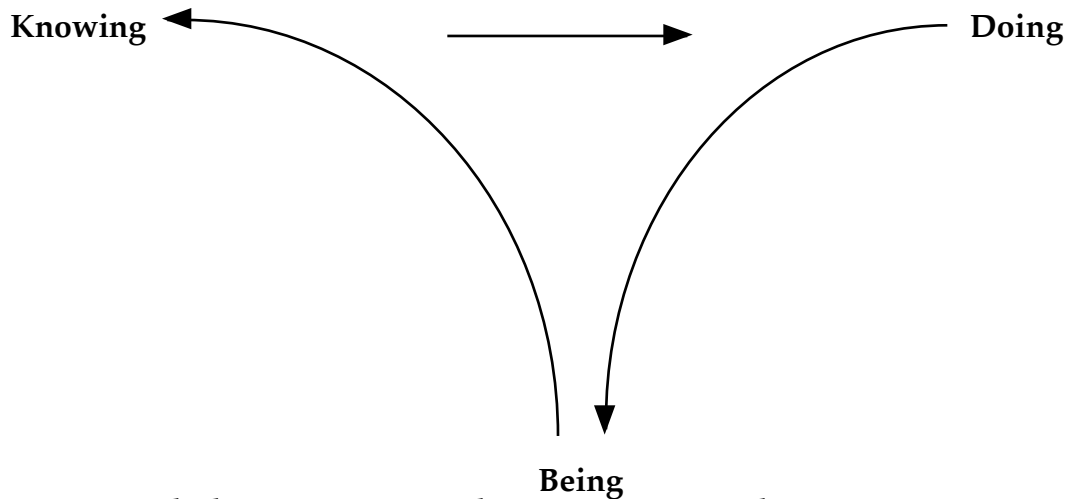
Further, when our living moves from doing to being our Being, our current humanly invented actions function as a limit on the intensity with which we be our Being. We do not arrive at greater authenticity by willfully creating what authenticity means. We arrive at greater authenticity in the being of our Being by taking in the Reality we are being given from beyond ourselves, from beyond our current knowledge, from beyond our current patterns of action. Authentic action flows from being our Being.

Finally, when we move from our current level of being our Being to the dynamic of knowing we limit our knowing to what we are already being. Knowing is therefore blocked: it becomes a process of justification for the style of being we are currently being rather than a fresh openness to further Reality.

The following two diagrams provide a visual presentation of these dynamics. The first diagram depicts the progression toward greater authenticity, more effective doing, and ever-deepening knowing:



If we reverse the arrows, we have a diagram that depicts the regression from current doing toward a shallow, delimited being of our Being, to a more occluded knowing, and then to more mind-controlled, moralistic, and ineffective doing:



If we approach these diagrams with our minds only, they can seem cryptic. Their meaning can only be seen by our consciousness being consciousness of consciousness and then using the mind to reflect these dynamics like a mirror. Perhaps the following illustrations will help focus our consciousness on these dynamics.

A Christian fundamentalist begins with a literal knowledge of the New Testament and moves from there to an ethics of action based on precepts found in that book. This renders *doing* a moralistic, rigid following of biblical rules. The fundamentalist then moves from this moralistic *doing* to a style of *being* that supports moralistic action. The wonder and fullness of our full Being is reduced to a justification for the already operating outward performance. This is the opposite of allowing our true Being to flow into our action. Then, the reduced state of being our Being curtails further *knowing*. It renders *knowing* closed rather than curious, open, and willing to take in greater Reality.

We can illustrate movement in the positive direction by describing a progressive mode of biblical interpretation in which we seek fresh truth about our lives rather than rational answers, religious beliefs, or ethical rules that give us a sense of security. We search the scriptures for clues to the actual experience of our ongoing inner lives. We study the scriptures in order to inquire into our own being. We open ourselves to see more deeply how human life actually functions. We allow truth to come into our lives

from beyond our current doctrines and moralities. As our *being of our Being* is thereby deepened, we learn to act from Being rather than from our minds only. We learn what the New Testament means by Freedom and how enacting the Freedom of our essential Being differs from enacting the legalisms of our rational mind, the customs of our group, or the dictates of the internal structures of our superego. When we act from our Being and our Freedom rather than from our current formulations of mind, we find that these ventures of free *doing* teach us further lessons, further *knowing* about how Reality truly functions. And this cycle continues; intensifying being, further freeing our action, and ever deepening our knowing.

The knowing-being-doing order of unfoldment is congruent with the way Reality functions when our life is being expanded. This can give us a further sense of how the Christian Trinity is a natural dynamic of living. First of all, the Christian experience of God is *knowing* the Almighty, the encounter with the descending angels. This leads to *being* in our deep Being the response of the Awe to the Awesome. This response is the Holy Spirit of Trust, Love and Freedom. And this being of our Spirit Being then leads to *doing* the life of the Awed Ones. In other words, we manifest the body of Christ in the practical processes of our life story and in the specific history of the times in which we live. Such living then brings us into deeper knowing of the Almighty, and the cycle continues.

The knowing-being-doing dynamics can also help us delineate the primary dynamics of the Holy Spirit. The Awe responses (Holy Spirit) to the Awesome (The Almighty) can be subdivided into: (1) the *knowing* dynamics of Trust, (2) the *being* dynamics of Love, and (3) the *doing* dynamics of Freedom. Trusting God's love precedes being Spirit Love toward God, self, and neighbors. And being Spirit Love toward God, self, and others releases and undergirds the life of Freedom. Finally, the living of our Freedom brings us into ever-deeper perceptions of Mysterious Reality and the life of Trusting Mysterious Reality.

The progression of knowing-being-doing characterizes the journey of Spirit realization. This is an endless journey in the sense that every new appropriation of being leads to further doing and further knowing and still further deepening of our appropriation of being our Being. Knowing Spirit leads to being Spirit leads to doing Spirit leads to knowing Spirit leads to being Spirit as an endless spiral of ever-deeper movement into the Infinite abyss of pure Mystery.

For many years I have cherished these closing lines of the D. H. Lawrence poem entitled "New Heaven and New Earth:"

Sightless and strong oblivion in utter life takes possession of me!
The unknown, strong current of life supreme
drowns me and sweeps me away and holds me down
to the sources of mystery, in the depths,
extinguishes there my risen resurrected life
and kindles it further at the core of utter mystery.¹

The Aspects of Trust, Love, and Freedom

The knowing-being-doing pattern can also be used to discern and organize the inclusive subparts of Trust, Love, and Freedom. Here is an outline of the major subparts of these three inclusive aspects of Holy Spirit.

¹ D. H. Lawrence, *Selected Poems* (Viking Press : 1959) page 81

Trust can be subdivided into three inclusive subparts:

1. Trust is trust in the human capacity to pay attention to the full Reality that confronts us. Trust is beyond mental belief, yet it includes trust in the discriminating capabilities of the human mind. Trust is openness to knowing Reality however grim, satisfying, challenging, rewarding, or joyous. This aspect of Trust is a state of Awe that I will call **The Illumination of Transparent Attention**. This is the knowing aspect of Trust.
2. Trust is trust in the truth of our forgiveness and benevolent care by the Every-Thing-Ness in which all things cohere which is also the No-Thing-Ness from which all things arise and into which all things return. This Trust in the benevolence of Reality toward our awakening soul is an actual experience rather than simply a mental assent to an idea. This aspect of Trust is a state of Awe that I will call **The Absolute Truth of Universal Forgiveness**. This is the being aspect of Trust.
3. Trust is trust in the human capacity to accept our acceptance and let Reality be the Reality it is. Such trust is the surrender of all efforts to deserve or earn or cause the divine benevolence being extended to us. This aspect of Trust is a state of Awe that I will call **The Rest of Effortless Letting Be**. This is the doing aspect of Trust.

Love can be subdivided into three inclusive subparts:

1. Love is love as the unconditional affirmation of one's own true Being. This love is experienced as confidence, as faith in oneself, as an energy of strength in the face of all circumstances, as a sense of autonomy, as a reconciliation with aloneness or singularity. This aspect of Love is a state of Awe that I will call **The Self Affirmation of Autonomous Strength**. This is the knowing aspect of Love.
2. Love is love as the unconditional affirmation of the Every-thing-ness/No-thing-ness we can lovingly call "God." This love is a felt experience, an actual state of Awe rather than simply an idea or an ideal. This aspect of Love is a state of Awe that I will call **The Joy of Enchantment with Being**. This is the being aspect of Love.
3. Love is love as the unconditional love of all one's neighboring beings. This love is experienced as an active and creative consent to do our living with whomever and among whomever we are actually living. This love includes enemies as well as friends. Indeed, it sees God's love flowing toward us through both enemy and friend and it responds to both enemy and friend in affirmation of their best interests. This aspect of Love is a state of Awe I will call **The Realism of Out-flowing Compassion**. This is the doing aspect of Love.

Freedom can be subdivided into three inclusive subparts:

1. Freedom is freedom from bondage to the habits of the developed personality and its ego delusion. This Freedom is experienced as a journey beyond the appearances of the body, beyond emotions, beyond thoughts, beyond states of soul to the interior ground that supports all aspects of personhood. This aspect of Freedom is a state of Awe that I will call **The Primal Merging Beyond Self Image**. This is the knowing aspect of Freedom.
2. Freedom is freedom from bondage to all views of good and evil. This freedom entails a disidentification with one's superego, with the images of good and evil taught to us by our parents or society. This Freedom is an actual experience rather than an idea or an ideal. This aspect of Freedom is a state of Awe that I will call **The Inherent Purity Beyond Good and Evil**. This is the being aspect of Freedom.
3. Freedom is freedom from bondage to fatalistic perceptions of the surroundings. This freedom means experiencing the future as always open, that one is a co-creator with the Creative Wholeness. This aspect of Freedom is a state of Awe that I will call **The Attuned Working Beyond Fate**. This is the doing aspect of Freedom.

In the following chapters I will describe each of these nine aspects of Holy Spirit in considerable detail.

On the next page is a triangular diagram that displays these nine basic aspects of Holy Spirit in an illuminating pictorial arrangement. Within each overarching triangle, the knowing subpart is placed in the upper left, the being subpart is placed in the downward center position, and the doing subpart is placed in the upper right.

The triangle shows a breakdown of each of the nine aspects into three inclusive subparts, making 27 subparts of Holy Spirit. I will not write separate descriptions of each of these 27 states of Awe, but I will use the insights they indicate when I further describe the nine basic aspects. Consider this triangle to be a contemplative art form, a device that allows the mind to open to the wide range of experiences that enrich the meaning of the classical term "Holy Spirit." Obviously, this is a rational model and like all rational models it can be superseded by a better model; nevertheless, this model points beyond itself to decades of my personal experience with the actuality of Spirit in human life. Spirit itself is a transrational actuality, always more than any rational model can encompass, always more than any one person has discovered.

Finally, I have placed the numbers 1 through 9 with the title of each of the nine major subparts. Each number refers to one of the nine personality types in the enneagram analysis of Spirit aspects and personality types. In Part Three, I will discuss the enneagram heritage in detail. I will use the enneagram heritage to help me describe the many-faceted fall into personality identification. But first I want to describe, in a more thorough fashion, the Angels of Trust, the Angels of Love, and the Angels of Freedom.

