

"The Holy Spirit is the Comforter, in Christ's name. HE PERSONIFIES CHRIST, YET IS A DISTINCT PERSONALITY. We may have the Holy Spirit if we ask for it and make it [a] habit to turn to and trust in God rather than in any finite human agent who may make mistakes." {20MR 324.2} (emphasis in caps added throughout)

Our Trinitarian (SDA) brethren will tell you that "**distinct personality**" denotes a separate and different individual with a distinct personage and therefore, the Holy Spirit who personifies Christ, "yet is a distinct personality" proves that the Holy Spirit is a separate, distinct Individual not unlike how Christ and God the Father are two separate individuals. But does it really mean that?

Other related statements:

*The Holy Spirit always leads to the written Word. **The Holy Spirit is a person; for He beareth witness** with our spirits that we are the children of God. When this witness is borne, it carries with it its own evidence. At such times we believe and are sure that we are the children of God. What strong evidence of the power of truth we can give to believers and unbelievers when we can voice the words of John, "We have known and believed the love that God hath to us. God is love; and he that dwelleth in love dwelleth in God, and God in him." [1 John 4:16.] {Ms20-1906.31}*

***The Holy Spirit has a personality**, else He could not bear witness to our spirits and with our spirits that we are the children of God. **He must also be a divine person**, else He could not search out the secrets which lie hidden in the mind of God. "For what man knoweth the things of a man save the spirit of man, which is in him; even so the things of God knoweth no man, but the Spirit of God." [1 Corinthians 2:11.] {Ms20-1906.32}*

The Personhood of the Holy Spirit is a contentious topic within Adventism's pneumatology and many Seventh-day Adventists use various statements by Ellen White to establish their position regarding the personality of the Holy Spirit. Following article examines the above statements to see if what the church believes is consistent with what the Testimonies reveal.

First of all the Adventists defines the Holy Spirit as an entirely independent divine Being, having all the attributes of God and is considered a God Himself not unlike Father and the Son. Accordingly He occupies the position as one of the three persons of the Godhead. This theology negates the idea that the Holy Spirit is actually the Spirit of the Father and the Son and confounds the personality of God as you shall see.

Let's take a closer look at the statement under consideration:

"The Holy Spirit is the Comforter, in Christ's name. HE PERSONIFIES CHRIST, YET IS A DISTINCT PERSONALITY. We may have the Holy Spirit if we ask for

it and make it [a] habit to turn to and trust in God rather than in any finite human agent who may make mistakes." {20MR 324.2}

The way the word “yet” is being used here conveys the meaning of “but nevertheless or “in spite of that.” It is being used as a balancing corrective for the first clause. The word “distinct” on the other hand means, “recognizably different in nature from something or someone else of a similar type.” In other words, someone might read the first clause and think that because the Spirit “personifies Christ” then that means that He (or It) is not a distinct personality. This is the error that sister White’s clause “yet is a distinct personality” guards against.

This is a common usage for the word “yet” even as the following quote will demonstrate, taken from the book, Education:

“The mighty power that works through all nature and sustains all things is not, as some men of science claim, merely an all-pervading principle, an actuating energy. GOD IS A SPIRIT; YET HE IS A PERSONAL BEING, for man was made in His image. AS A PERSONAL BEING, God has revealed Himself in His Son. Jesus, the outshining of the Father’s glory, ‘and the express image of His person’ (Hebrews 1:3), was on earth found in fashion as a man. AS A PERSONAL SAVIOUR He came to the world. AS A PERSONAL SAVIOUR He ascended on high. AS A PERSONAL SAVIOUR He intercedes in the heavenly courts. Before the throne of God in our behalf ministers “One like the Son of man.” Daniel 7:13. {Ed 131.5}

Due to the fact that **“God is a spirit”** some might erroneously conclude that He is only an all-pervading energy/essence/influence instead of a Personal Being (tangible Being with local presence). The clause “yet He is a personal being” is a balancing corrective against that conclusion. One thing to note here is that God’s personality is described as both **“A spirit”** and **“A personal Being,” (not a unity of 3 persons)**, referring to a single individual, and that Jesus, being His Father’s express image, is distinguished as the Son of that one God, who is also A personal Being/Saviour. Hope this is clear.

Here's another example of how "yet" is being used as a balancing corrective for the first clause:

*“The Lord's throne is in heaven’ (Psalm 11:4); **YET BY HIS SPIRIT HE IS EVERYWHERE PRESENT.** He has an intimate knowledge of, and a personal interest in, all the works of His hand.” { E. G. White, Education , p. 132}*

Compare this with the quotes below

*“The Bible shows us God in His high and holy place, not in a state of inactivity, not in silence and solitude, but surrounded by ten thousand times ten thousand and thousands of thousands of holy beings, all waiting to do His will. THROUGH THESE MESSENGERS HE IS IN ACTIVE COMMUNICATION WITH EVERY PART OF HIS DOMINION. **BY HIS SPIRIT HIS IS EVERYWHERE PRESENT.** THROUGH THE AGENCY OF HIS SPIRIT AND HIS ANGELS HE MINISTERS TO THE CHILDREN OF MEN.” {MH 417.2}*

*“Though the ministrations were to be REMOVED FROM THE EARTHLY TO THE HEAVENLY TEMPLE; though the sanctuary and our great high priest would be INVISIBLE TO HUMAN SIGHT, yet the disciples were to suffer no loss thereby. They would realize no break in their communion, and no diminution of power because of the Saviour’s absence. WHILE JESUS MINISTERS IN THE SANCTUARY ABOVE, **HE IS STILL BY HIS SPIRIT** THE MINISTER OF THE CHURCH ON EARTH. He is withdrawn from the eye of sense, but HIS PARTING PROMISE IS FULFILLED, ‘LO, I AM WITH YOU ALWAYS, even unto the end of the world.’ Matthew 28:20. While He delegates His power to inferior ministers, HIS ENERGIZING PRESENCE IS STILL WITH HIS CHURCH.” {DA 166.2}*

As noted earlier, because God is a Spirit, some might deny His corporeal personality (having a tangible form and a local personage). By contrast, in the case of the above statements, some might think that because God has a local personage (God occupies a **“throne in heaven”** or He resides **“in His high and holy place”** surrounded by “holy beings”/angels, etc.) that at the same time he cannot be everywhere present. But again, **“yet”** is being employed here to guard against that thought. What is significant here though is HOW He is omnipresent: **“BY HIS SPIRIT HE IS EVERYWHERE PRESENT.”** It is by the very medium of His own Spirit, **“THROUGH THE AGENCY OF HIS SPIRIT AND HIS ANGELS”** that He is everywhere present. The same is true for Christ. Presently, He is ministering in the heavenly sanctuary; this is His immediate divine activity, but **“HE IS STILL BY HIS SPIRIT”** ministers the church on earth.

What is also notable here are the two distinct but integral aspects of God’s entire personage; God’s corporeal personality should be distinguished from the Spirit of God, the incorporeal. This also guards against any spiritualistic idea that God’s ENTIRE personage is ONLY an all pervading essence, devoid of distinct, corporeal attributes — having a tangible bodily form. Thus there are two distinct aspects of God’s personalities.

God the Father and His Son are Personal Beings-Protection against pantheism

*“The word and works of Christ testified to a divine power which accomplishes miraculous results, of a future, eternal life exalted above the finite life, of God as a Father to the children of men, watchful of their true interests, and guarding them. He taught that God was a rewarder of the righteous, and a punisher of the transgressor. **HE WAS NOT AN INTANGIBLE SPIRIT**, but a living ruler of the universe...” {3SP 47.1}*

*“The apostle Paul speaks of our Mediator, the only begotten Son of God, **WHO IN A STATE OF GLORY WAS IN THE FORM OF GOD**, the Commander of all the heavenly hosts, and who, when he clothed his divinity with humanity, took upon him the form of a servant...” {YI October 13, 1898, par. 4}*

“THROUGH Jesus Christ, God—NOT A PERFUME, NOT SOMETHING INTANGIBLE, BUT A PERSONAL GOD—created man and endowed him with intelligence and power. It is God that thundereth in the heavens. His voice reacheth to the ends of the earth. He holdeth the winds in His hands. He sendeth lightnings with rain. He looketh on the earth and it trembleth; He toucheth the hills, and they smoke. He melteth the mountains like wax at His

presence. He maketh the outgoings of the morning and the evening to rejoice. He maketh His sun to rise on the evil and on the good."

"HE [Christ] REPRESENTED GOD NOT AS AN ESSENCE THAT PERVADED NATURE, BUT AS A GOD WHO HAS A PERSONALITY. Christ was the express image of His Father's person; and He came to our world to restore in man God's moral image, in order that man, although fallen, might through obedience to God's commandments become enstamped with the divine image and character—adorned with the beauty of divine loveliness." (Manuscript 24, 1891). {7BC 921.9}

"The theory that God is an ESSENCE PERVADING ALL NATURE is one of Satan's most subtle devices. It misrepresents God and is a dishonor to His greatness and majesty." – {CCh 322.6}

"THE THEORY THAT GOD IS AN ESSENCE PERVADING ALL NATURE is received by many who profess to believe the Scriptures; but, however beautifully clothed, **THIS THEORY IS A MOST DANGEROUS DECEPTION.... IF GOD IS AN ESSENCE PERVADING ALL NATURE, THEN HE DWELLS IN ALL MEN; AND IN ORDER TO ATTAIN HOLINESS, MAN HAS ONLY TO DEVELOP THE POWER WITHIN HIM.** These theories [pantheism], followed to their logical conclusion, ... **DO AWAY WITH THE NECESSITY FOR THE ATONEMENT AND MAKE MAN HIS OWN SAVIOR....** Those who accept them are in great danger of being led finally to look upon the whole Bible as a fiction...." {FLB 40.5}

"The new theories in regard to God and Christ, as brought out in "The Living Temple", are not in harmony with the teaching of Christ. The Lord Jesus came to this world to represent the Father. He did not represent God as an essence pervading nature, **BUT AS A PERSONAL BEING.** Christians should bear in mind that **GOD HAS A PERSONALITY AS VERILY AS HAS CHRIST.**" {SpM 324.2}

"Had God desired to be represented as dwelling personally in the things of nature,—in the flower, the tree, the spire of grass,—would not Christ have spoken of this to His disciples when He was on the earth? **BUT NEVER IN THE TEACHING OF CHRIST IS GOD THUS SPOKEN OF. CHRIST AND THE APOSTLES TAUGHT CLEARLY THE TRUTH OF THE EXISTENCE OF A PERSONAL GOD.**" {8T 265.6}

"Nature is not God, nor ever was God. God is in nature, the voice of nature testifies of God, but nature is not God. **IT ONLY BEARS TESTIMONY TO GOD'S POWER** as His created works. **THERE IS A PERSONAL GOD, THE FATHER; THERE IS A PERSONAL CHRIST, THE SON.**" — U. T., July 3, 1898. {HL 287.1}

"But Christ came as a PERSONAL SAVIOUR to the world. He represented a PERSONAL GOD. AS A PERSONAL SAVIOUR, He ascended on high; and He will come again as He ascended to heaven—A PERSONAL SAVIOUR. He is the express image of the Father's person. "In him dwelleth all the fulness of the Godhead bodily" (Colossians 2:9). {1SM 295.2}

"I saw a throne, and on it sat the Father and his Son Jesus Christ. I gazed on Jesus' countenance and admired his lovely person. . . . I ASKED JESUS IF HIS FATHER HAD A FORM LIKE HIMSELF; HE SAID HE HAD, BUT I COULD NOT BEHOLD IT." (Letter From Sister Harmon, Day-Star, March 14, 1846, par. 7)

*"The Son of God was next in authority to the great Lawgiver. He knew that his life alone could be sufficient to ransom fallen man. He was of as much more value than man as his noble, spotless character, and exalted office as commander of all the heavenly host, were above the work of man. He was in the express image of his Father, **NOT IN FEATURE ALONE, BUT IN PERFECTION OF CHARACTER.**"* (Spirit of Prophecy, vol. 2, p. 91)

*"Oh, the wonderful sophistry that is coming in, **THE MASTERLY SOPHISTRY—THAT GOD IS AN ESSENCE. WE GOT A GOD, A PERSONAL GOD AND A PERSONAL SAVIOUR,** and Satan is seeking with all his wiles to seduce men and women to become as gods themselves and flattering them to have a higher and higher class of education. But we want the lower class. That is the highest for us to obtain, because self lives."* (E.G. White, Manuscript 153, 1904)

As you can see and it's worth noting that Ellen White was very much concerned with portraying "God" and Christ as Personal Beings with corporeal personality and not as some kind of de-personal, mysterious essence pervading all nature. It is also worth noting here that "personal being" is equated with having a form and moreover Christ was in the express image of His Father, both in feature and character.

Thus, it begs the question. If "God" is defined as a "personal being" with corporeal personality and Christ is the express image of that God, how then is "God the Holy Spirit" (as understood by the trinitarians) who is known as a formless being, devoid of corporeal personality, be also considered a "personal God"?

Though the Bible describes God as a Spirit (John 4:24), He is also a personal Being with a distinct, tangible bodily features, i.e face, mouth, hands, feet, etc. who occupies a local location:

Matthew 6:9 "... Our Father WHICH ART IN HEAVEN, Hallowed be thy name."

Matthew 16:17 "...Blessed art thou, Simon Barjona: for flesh and blood hath not revealed it unto thee, but my Father WHICH IS IN HEAVEN."

Matt 18:10 "Take heed that ye despise not one of these little ones; for I say unto you, That in heaven their angels do always behold the FACE OF MY FATHER WHICH IS IN HEAVEN"

Again, God is not a formless entity and that being the case, it would stand to reason that Jesus (being the express image of His Father) also existed/exists as a spiritual Being and yet has tangible form.

Bible verses that speak of God as having bodily form: Exodus 24:10, Exodus 33:20, 23; Number 11:23, 1 Samuel 8:21, 1 Samuel 13:14, Psalm 11:4, Isaiah 40:2, Isaiah 66:1, Daniel 7:9, Matthew 4:4, Luke 11:20, John 5:37). Thus, in the creation of man, these attributes of God (His image/likeness) are also reproduced in man.

However, notice what she said about the Holy Spirit:

“The believers in all ages are to be one, and the HOLY SPIRIT IS THE LIVING ESSENCE that cements, animates, and PERVADES the whole body of Christ's followers.” {2 MR 335}

Couple that with the following:

“An unseen hand guides the planets in their circuit of the heavens. A mysterious life pervades all nature” - Ed pg. 99

“The heart not yet hardened by contact with evil is quick to recognize the PRESENCE THAT PERVADES ALL CREATED THINGS.” ibid pg. 100

“We cannot present any correct representation in words of God's glory and majesty. It is beyond expression. But we can enjoy the contemplation of God, and the SENSE OF HIS PRESENCE. We can know of Him all that human beings can bear. We can talk with Him in prayer.” {UL 347.6}

*“When in times of trouble and perplexity we trust Him fully, we have a living sense of His cheering, **ALL-PERVADING PRESENCE AND POWER**. We realize that the Lord is indeed our strength and our portion forever. We can be one with Christ in God. But **LET US NEVER UNDERTAKE TO DEFINE GOD AS AN ESSENCE. NEVER, NEVER VENTURE ONE STEP INTO THE WAY OF PUTTING GOD IN THE PLACE OF THE THINGS OF HIS CREATION.**” — Manuscript 126, Nov. 29, 1905, “A Warning Against Present Dangers.” {UL 347.7}*

What is significant about the above statements is that, while we are warned to “NEVER UNDERTAKE TO DEFINE GOD AS AN ESSENCE” that pervades, the Holy Spirit is described as the “LIVING ESSENCE” that “PERVADES.” She Further stated that believers can experience “ALL-PERVADING PRESENCE AND POWER” of God or that God's life/presence “pervades all created things.”

If the Holy Spirit is “God” as taught by Trinity, why would Ellen White say “**never undertake to define God as an "essence"**” and yet she describes the Holy Spirit as an "essence"?

Is Ellen White contradicting herself here? No! The truth of the matter is, that God's Spirit/life/power and presence should not be confused with God Himself (His corporeal personage). God's actual personage is not stretched out as some formless, mysterious essence pervading all universe. God is a personal Being, who is physically in heaven and has a local and tangible bodily presence. That is where He lives, works, and resides (This is also true of His Son). But it is through His Holy Spirit (**a “distinct personality” that**

is different than God's bodily personality), which can manifest as an "all-pervading presence and power." That being the case, it would seem incongruous to distinguish the "Spirit of God" as "God" in the same sense that Father is God.

Ellen White was adamant about distinguishing God's Spirit/power/presence with God Himself, especially in light of the prevailing pantheistic ideas about God, namely because of John Harvey Kellogg (Influential doctor, contemporary of Ellen White who authored, "The Living Temple"), for he was confounding the presence and power of God with the personality of God Himself by defining the Holy Spirit as God not unlike the Father and Son.

"Pantheism is the term used to designate the strange new teachings that were being introduced. Pantheism pictures God NOT as a great personal Being, but as a mysterious essence—an impersonal influence pervading all nature. God is seen in all nature—in trees, flowers, sunshine, air, and human beings. THE POWER OF GOD IN NATURE IS CONFUSED WITH THE PERSONALITY OF GOD." {5BIO 281.3}

"As is so often the case with misleading teachings, it came to the ranks of Seventh-day Adventists subtly, as new, advanced truth. At first it was not discerned as a threat to the church. Dr. Kellogg had toyed with these concepts before James White's death in 1881, and considering it 'great light,' had discussed it with Ellen White. 'Those theories are wrong,' she told him. 'I have met them before.' He seemed dazed as she showed him the outcome of espousing such a philosophy. She then admonished, 'Never teach such theories in our institutions; do not present them to the people.'"—Manuscript 70, 1905. {ibid 281.4}

"Does not God say he fills immensity of space? We answer, No. Ps.cxxxix,7,8. Whither shall I go from thy Spirit? or whither shall I flee from thy presence? If I ascend up into heaven, thou art there, etc. God by his Spirit may fill heaven and earth, etc. SOME CONFOUND GOD WITH HIS SPIRIT, WHICH MAKES CONFUSION. Ps.xi,4. The Lord is in his holy temple, the Lord's throne is in heaven: his eyes behold, etc. Hab.ii,20; Ps.cii,19. For he hath looked down from the height of his Sanctuary; from heaven did the Lord behold the earth. 1Pet.iii,12. For the eyes of the Lord are over the righteous, and his ears are open unto their prayers, etc. Ps.lxxx,1. Give ear, O Shepherd of Israel, thou that leadest Joseph like a flock; thou that dwellest between the cherubims, shine forth. Ps.xcix,1; Isa.xxxvii,16." — J. B. Frisbie {March 7, 1854 JWe, ARSH 50.9} (James White as the editor)

Pantheism thus confounds the Spirit of God, which is the power and presence of God with God Himself. Consequently, many (trinitarians, including the current SDAs) have taken God's Spirit-the Holy Spirit as a separate God Being altogether (aka "God the Holy Spirit"), a formless being, whose ENTIRE personage is ONLY an all pervading essence, devoid of any corporeal attributes. This violates the Testimony of Ellen White's definition of a "Personal God" and destroys the personality of God. Furthermore it negates the two distinct attributes of God's personalities (corporeal and incorporeal).

Again, God is a personal Being and He resides in heaven but He can extend His character/life/power and presence beyond his local presence BY His own Spirit-his incorporeal personality, a “distinct personality” that is different than Himself.

What will become increasingly evident is that the Holy Spirit is NOT an entirely separate “Being” in the same sense as Father and the Son are. Nor is He an IMPERSONAL essence pervading all nature. What you will hopefully discover is that the Holy Spirit is the very PERSONAL life/power and presence of the Father and the Son, He/It also operates in a distinctly different capacity (personality) than Father and the Son’s corporeal personality.

Two versions of Kellogg’s pantheistic teaching.

First stage (non-trinitarian) - In this view, he taught that GOD THE FATHER himself was everywhere. He spoke of God as pervading in all things. God is the energy in the space between the atoms, holding all things together. God is the gravity; God Himself (His very own substance) is the life-giving power of the sunshine, His very substance is in the flower, the rocks, etc. God therefore became depersonalized, a non-Person.

Second stage (trinitarian) - Which incorporated the trinity. In this view, Kellogg simply transferred this idea of an all-pervading Person to the Holy Spirit to try and avoid what he thought were others objections. In this view it was “God the Holy Spirit,” not God or Christ, who was everywhere, but his problem was in also making the Holy Spirit a Person in the same sense that the Father and Son are Persons. The problem persisted in that he had a “Person” that is everywhere.

Kellogg's pantheism initially sought to depersonalize God (Father) by making Him only an all pervading essence but subsequently adopted a more trinitarian understanding whereby the “God” that is pervading in all space became “God the Holy Spirit,” a separate individual, **whose entire personage is formless and devoid of corporeal personality** (not unlike the modern Adventist’s pneumatology). But this is a confusion and a contradiction to the biblical ontology of God’s personality.

Three Economic Personalities

1. There is ONE Sovereign Most High God - the Father “OF whom are all things” (1 Cor. 8:6)

-Father (real Father; corporeal, personal divine being-has bodily form and shape; has a local presence i.e. “our Father which art in heaven”-Mt 6:9)

2. There are Two Equal Divine Beings - the Father and the Son

-Begotten Son (real pre-incarnate Son; corporeal, personal divine being-has a bodily form and shape, has a local presence i.e. “We have such a high priest, who is set on the right hand of the throne of the Majesty in the heavens”-Heb 8:1; “BY Whom are all things” -1Cor 8:6)

3. There are Three Economic Personalities - Father, Son and the Holy Spirit.

“They have ONE God and ONE Saviour; and ONE Spirit--the Spirit of Christ--is to bring unity into their ranks.” — (E.G. White, 9T 189.3, 1909)

-Holy Spirit — non-corporeal aspect of the Father and Son’s personality whereby they are omnipresent.

The words such as "person" and "personality" in the Spirit of Prophecy have a range of meanings, but two are important to this matter:

1. "Person" and "personality" can refer to a WHOLE BEING.
2. "Person" and "personality" can also refer to an ECONOMIC OFFICE OR ROLE.

We may refer to the first of these the "Capital 'P' Person" and the second of these the "lower case 'p' person" definitions.

But there are three distinct ACTIVITIES of deity.

1. There is what the Father is doing in His immediate locality,
2. What the Son is doing in His immediate locality, and
3. The WORK They are performing (TOGETHER) throughout the universe. These constitute three economic offices or "persons"/"personalities" in the sense of roles. Thus, in this sense, the Holy Spirit would be considered a lower-case 'p' person.

The problem with both of Kellogg’s views is that they held that the Holy Spirit is a “capital ‘P’ Person” who is without form and without a corporeal personality. According to this view, Holy Spirit is a Whole Person, not unlike the Father and the Son, who has his own cognitive spirit/mind and is everywhere present, occupying all space.

The salient point here is that Biblical ontology holds that only the Father and Son are Whole Beings. The Whole Beings consists of substance/body (shape and form) PLUS Spirit/mind. The Father and the Son are capital ‘P’ Persons and therefore fit the first of these definitions. The “personhood” of the Holy Spirit cannot be a capital ‘P’ Person in the same sense that the Father and Son are ‘P’ Persons. Otherwise, that would make the Holy Spirit, a Whole Being without having a bodily form while being only an all pervading entity, which is pantheism. You CANNOT HAVE a capital ‘P’ Person’s entire personality be an all-pervading entity. A capital ‘P’ Person (Father and the Son), existing as a corporeal Being is omnipresent only BY His Spirit (lower-case ‘p’ person). Recognition of two distinct personality of a Whole Being is critical.

Therefore, when Ellen White speaks of the Spirit being a “distinct personality,” she is NOT saying that the Holy Spirit is a different individual

but speaking of the DISTINCT WORK operating in a DIFFERENT (incorporeal) personality in contrast to the immediate work of Christ in His physical location in the Heavenly Sanctuary. Holy Spirit is a distinct personality in that it is distinctly different than Father and Son's corporeal personality. When she speaks of the Holy Spirit interceding not as Christ intercedes, it is the same individual doing the intercession, but Christ's physical intercession is before the Father, while His Spirit's intercession is on our hearts (primarily the transformative power effectuating the believer through the Word).

"Where shall I go from YOUR SPIRIT? Where shall I flee from Your PRESENCE? If I go to heaven or hell, You are there. If I take the wings of the morning, and dwell in the uttermost parts of the sea; Even there shall thy hand lead me, and thy right hand shall hold me.

— Psalm 139:7-10

Alpha and Omega

Some anti-trinitarians intimate that Kellogg's pantheism was the alpha of deadly heresies and the trinity is the omega. I would assert here that that is not entirely accurate. Let's consider some inspired statements regarding the question.

*"This subject has been kept before me for the past twenty years, yea, for more than twenty years. Before my husband's death, Dr. Kellogg came to my room to tell me that he had great light. He sat down and told me what it was. **It was similar to some of the views that he has presented in Living Temple. I said, "Those theories are wrong. I have met them before. I had to meet them when I first began to travel".... 5MR 278.4***

*I am instructed to speak plainly. "Meet it," is the word spoken to me. "Meet it firmly, and without delay." But it is not to be met by our taking our working forces from the field to investigate doctrines and points of difference. We have no such investigation to make. **In the book Living Temple there is presented the ALPHA of deadly heresies. The OMEGA will follow, and will be received by those who are not willing to heed the warning God has given. {1SM 200.1}***

*"...the book Living Temple is unsound, and that this reasoning would lead astray the minds of those who are not thoroughly established on the foundation principles of present truth. **It introduces that which is nought but speculation in regard to the personality of God and WHERE HIS PRESENCE IS.**" {1SM 201.3}*

*"The **sanctuary question** is a clear and definite doctrine as we have held it as a people. You are not definitely clear on the **personality of God**, which is everything to us as a people. You have virtually destroyed the Lord God Himself." {Lt300-1903}*

From at least 1881 and perhaps her whole ministry the subject of Spiritualism and Spiritualistic interpretations concerning God's personality was "kept before" her. Please note that in her response to Kellogg, she says, **"In the book Living Temple there is presented the ALPHA of deadly heresies. The OMEGA will follow"**. Thus, we can see that the "alpha" has

something to do with Kellogg's pantheistic theories presented in his book, *The Living Temple*, which destroyed the personality of God. She then connects the **"sanctuary question"** to the **"personality of God"**.

Couple those with the statements like,

"But I have ever had the same testimony to bear which I now bear regarding the personality of God...". 4MR 57.1

And

*"There is in it [Kellogg's teachings] the beginning of theories **WHICH, CARRIED TO THEIR LOGICAL CONCLUSION, WOULD DESTROY FAITH IN THE SANCTUARY QUESTION** and in the atonement. I do not think that Dr. Kellogg saw this clearly. I do not think that he realized that in laying his new foundation of faith, he was directing his steps toward infidelity." (Lt. 33, 17-1-1904)*

*"...there they become indoctrinated with the very sentiments regarding the **PERSONALITY OF GOD AND CHRIST** that would undermine the foundation of our faith. The sanctuary question, which means so much to the heavenly family and to the believers on earth, has been made as nothingness." — Letter 72, 1906*

"I have often seen the lovely Jesus, that he is a person. I asked him if his Father was a person, and had a form like himself. Said Jesus. "I am in the express image of my Father's Person... I have often seen that the spiritual view took away all the glory of heaven, and that in many minds the throne of David, and the lovely person of Jesus had been burned up in the fire of spiritualism. I have seen that some, who have been deceived, and led into this error, would be brought out into the light of truth, but it would be almost impossible for them to get entirely rid of the deceptive power of spiritualism. Such should make thorough work in confessing their errors, and leaving them forever." {ExV 64.1, 2}

The alpha is the deconstruction of the "personality of God" and the omega is the deconstruction of the Sanctuary; They are causally linked. Thus, the ultimate end result of "Alpha" (Kellogg's pantheistic/Spiritualistic theories/destruction of the personality of God) will lead to the "Omega" (that Christ, the sanctuary, the atonement, etc are "burned up" {ExV 64.2} and become "nothingness" {Ev 614.2}). Kellogg's pantheistic assertions, therefore, taken to its logical conclusion would negate the literal/tangible personhood of the Father and the Son in heaven ministering on our behalf in the literal sanctuary in heaven. More on Kellogg [HERE](#).

Notice the following statement by James White (husband of Ellen White):

*"The Most Holy, containing the Ark of the ten commandments, was then opened for our Great High Priest to enter to make atonement for the cleansing of the Sanctuary. **IF WE TAKE THE LIBERTY TO SAY THERE IS NOT A LITERAL ARK, CONTAINING THE TEN COMMANDMENTS IN HEAVEN, WE MAY GO ONLY A STEP FURTHER AND DENY THE LITERAL CITY, AND THE LITERAL***

SON OF GOD. Certainly, Adventists should not choose the spiritual view, rather than the one we have presented. We see no middle ground to be taken. {Parable by James White, p. 16, Para. 1, [MATT25]; ND JW PARA 16.1}
Source click [HERE](#)

If you de-personalize God and follow that from cause to effect, you throw out the Sanctuary. I believe this was the significant underlying context as to why she chose such expression as the “third person” or “personality” language in describing the Holy Spirit. It was not intended to bring in a new theology (“God the Holy Spirit” being an entirely separate individual) but to uphold the truths of the sanctuary and the personality of God. Therefore, by portraying the Spirit as a “third person” or having a “distinct personality”, it counters the depersonalization of the Pantheistic concept of god and yet it also distinguishes the Spirit as the very personal presence and power of the Father and Son that is distinct/different than their corporeal personality.

So all of this brings us back to the statement in question. Let’s look at it again.

We have one statement – **“The Holy Spirit is the Comforter, in Christ’s name. HE PERSONIFIES CHRIST, YET IS A DISTINCT PERSONALITY.”**

In the context, to “personify” is to represent or embody the humanity of the Man Christ Jesus to us. The Spirit Itself, is not Christ in His PHYSICAL Person. However despite this personification of Jesus, the Spirit is yet **“a distinct personality.”**

The literary context suggests that “distinct” is synonymous with “different” here. In other words, the Holy Spirit is distinctly different from Christ in its personification of Christ. Also, you cannot “personify” yourself.

Now that brings us to another question. How can the Holy Spirit be a distinct personality? There are a few options here.

Option 1: It is a different Person/Being altogether. This is the option is believed by our Trinitarian brethren.

One can certainly make this argument for there are numerous statements by Ellen White where she uses such expressions as “distinct” and “personalities” to denote two distinctly separate individuals:

*“Christ and God are one, and **yet they are distinct personalities.** Christ spoke with conscious authority, as one possessing in Himself power that would enable Him to perform His work.”* {Ms140-1903.44}

*“Christ is one with the father, but Christ and God are **two distinct personages**”*(RH June 1, 1905)

*“God had placed upon His Son authority to lay hold of the eternal throne with His divine nature. While Christ stood forth **distinct in His own personality,** He reflected the luster of the greatness that was His because of His position of honor within the encircling light of the eternal throne, in unity with God.”* {Ms156-1903.4}

"These words show that God and Christ are **two personalities, distinct and separate**. The unity for which Christ prays, which is to make believers one with Him, as He is one with the Father, does not destroy the personality of God or the personality of Christ. The believers become sons of God, and the personality of all is preserved." {Lt52-1906.23}

"Neither pray I for these alone, but for them also which shall believe on Me through their word; that they all may be one; as Thou, Father, art in Me, and I in Thee, that they also may be one in us." **These words present God and Christ as two distinct personalities.**" {Notebook Leaflets, p. 124}

"On Sabbath, April 27, many of our brethren and sisters from neighboring churches gathered in the parlors with the sanitarium family, and I spoke to them there. I read the first chapter of Hebrews as the basis of my discourse. **This chapter clearly indicates the individual personalities of the Father and the Son.**" {R&H, Aug. 1, 1907}

"In this Scripture [John 1:1-4, 14-16: 3:34-36] **God and Christ are spoken of as two distinct personalities, each acting in their own individuality.**" {MR 760, p. 18}

Above, we find Ellen White using the expressions, "distinct" and "personalities" to denote two distinctly different individuals (Christ and God the Father). Hence, it's not too unreasonable for most Trinitarian Seventh-day Adventists to take the expression, "HE PERSONIFIES CHRIST, YET IS A DISTINCT PERSONALITY," to mean that the Holy Spirit is a separate distinct individual not unlike how the Father and the Son are two separate individuals. However, there may be other viable alternatives.

Other possible viable options

Option 2: It is a distinct/different personality because it is the Spirit of Christ (divested of the personality of humanity) operating in a different capacity than His visible, physical human personage as when He was on the earth.

While on earth He was limited to His humanity, not omnipresent in Spirit; He was localized. No one can be a true human personality if he is omnipresent in Spirit. That is an attribute of Divine personality not human. Thus upon His return to heaven, having been reinstated with power, Christ, though forever to retain His humanity, can now act in an omnipresent capacity by His Spirit.

"The HOLY SPIRIT is the SPIRIT of CHRIST, which is sent to all men to give them sufficiency," — (E.G. White, 14MR 84.3)

"The Lord is soon to come. We want that complete and perfect understanding which the Lord alone can give. It is not safe to catch the spirit from another. WE WANT THE HOLY SPIRIT, WHICH IS JESUS CHRIST. If we commune with God, we shall have strength and grace and efficiency." — (Letter to Prescott W.W. E.G. White, Lt66, April 10, 1894)

“but it is the leaven of the SPIRIT OF JESUS CHRIST, WHICH IS SENT DOWN FROM HEAVEN, CALLED THE HOLY GHOST, and that Spirit affects the heart and the character.” — (E.G. White, Ms36-1891)

Option 3: It is a distinct/different personality because the holy Spirit is not just the Spirit of Christ. It is also the Spirit of God. Thus the mutually shared Spirit of Two Persons is being experienced by the believer. Thus It is not just One or the Other but Both. However it is the Man Christ Jesus who is being personified because He is the One who knows, experientially, what it is like to go through the entire gambit of human experience and have overcome. Christ would be taking the representative lead, if you will.

“He will send his representative, the Holy Spirit; for He says, “I will not leave you comfortless; I will come to you.” BY THE SPIRIT the Father and the Son will come and make THEIR abode with you. {BEcho January 15, 1893, par. 8}

“If a man love me, he will keep my words; and the Father will love him, and WE WILL COME UNTO HIM.’ WE, that is, THE FATHER, THE SON, AND THE HOLY GHOST, and make our abode in him. -Letter 44, 1893. (To A. T. Jones, April 9, 1893.)

"We will come unto him"

Christ has his own spirit:

“Searching what, or what manner of time the SPIRIT OF CHRIST which was in them did signify, when it testified beforehand the sufferings of Christ, and the glory that should follow.” — 1 Peter 1:11

Father has his own spirit:

“For it is not ye that speak, but the SPIRIT OF YOUR FATHER which speaketh in you.” — Matthew 10:20

But John talks of both the Father and the Son dwelling in us by the the Comforter/Holy Spirit (one spirit).

In John 14 verse 23, Jesus says, “If a man love me, he will keep my words: and my Father will love him, and WE [Father and the Son] will come unto him, and make OUR abode with him.” Because scripture tells us that Christ dwells in us while God dwells in Christ:

“But if I do, though ye believe not me, believe the works: that ye may know, and believe, that the FATHER IS IN ME, and I in him.” — John 10:38 (compare 14:10,11)

“I IN THEM, AND THOU IN ME, that they may be made perfect in one; and that the world may know that thou hast sent me, and hast loved them, as thou hast loved me.” — John 17:23

“The Father gave HIS Spirit without measure to his Son,” — (E.G. White, RH, Nov 5, 1908)(John 3:34)

“If a man love Me,” Christ said, “he will keep My words; and My Father will love him, and WE WILL COME UNTO HIM, AND MAKE OUR ABODE WITH HIM.” John 14:23. The spell of a stronger, a perfect mind will be over us; for we have a living connection with the source of all-enduring strength. In our divine life we shall be brought into captivity to Jesus Christ. We shall no longer live the common life of selfishness, but CHRIST WILL LIVE IN US. HIS CHARACTER WILL BE REPRODUCED IN OUR NATURE. Thus shall we bring forth the fruits of the Holy Spirit—“some thirty, and some sixty, and some an hundred.” {COL 61.3}

In this case, the Holy Spirit is “distinct” or different because when Christ comes to us as our Comforter/Holy Spirit, through the medium of His own Spirit (one Spirit), it is not just Himself but He is also imbued with the presence of His Father’s Spirit dwelling in Him and thus, we can have fellowship with both the Father and the Son together. This is why John says in 1 John 1:3, **“...truly our fellowship is with the Father, and with his Son Jesus Christ.”** It is not that the Holy Spirit is another separate being but rather, it is THROUGH the Spirit (their own Spirit), that we can experience the Father and the Son.

The Holy Spirit is truly Christ but not in personality when it comes to the Spirit in your heart. It is Christ’s mind/character/personality we receive through His spoken word that comes from Himself. The word carries with it the distinct intelligence/characteristics/mind of Christ.

“The mind of the Father was the mind of the Son.” — Lt1-1882.1

“Let this mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus” — Phil 2:5

Thus we have both the Father and Son as we have their mind/personality within our hearts produced by the word of God. This life, given in the Word, forms Christ within but it functions in the human body as a “distinct personality”.

“IT IS THROUGH THE WORD THAT CHRIST ABIDES IN HIS FOLLOWERS. This is the same vital union that is represented by eating His flesh and drinking His blood. The words of Christ are spirit and life. Receiving them, you receive the life of the Vine. You live ‘by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God.’ Matthew 4:4. The life of Christ in you produces the same fruits as in Him. Living in Christ, adhering to Christ, supported by Christ, drawing nourishment from Christ, you bear fruit after the similitude of Christ.” {DA 677.1}

The local, corporeal (tangible/physical/visible) Personality of Jesus is in Heaven alongside His Father, but we are given Their Personality through their Word. This way of experiencing their Personality is **“distinctly”** different than if we were to be literally present with them-it’s experienced internally. Jesus has the “life/mind of God” in Him, and yet Jesus is a distinct personality, and so it is with the Spirit. The Spirit is imbued with the “life/mind of Christ and God but nevertheless has its own distinct personality-it’s spiritual:

The term "distinct" doesn't always mean separate or different.

Notice how Sister White uses the same expression below:

“WE NEED TO HAVE MORE DISTINCT VIEWS OF JESUS and a fuller comprehension of the value of eternal realities. The beauty of holiness is to fill the hearts of God’s children; and that this may be accomplished, we should seek for divine disclosures of heavenly things.”

— Ellen White, *Steps to Christ*, p. 99.3, 1892

"LOOKING UNTO JESUS WE OBTAIN BRIGHTER AND MORE DISTINCT VIEW OF GOD, and by beholding we become changed. Goodness, love for our fellow men, becomes our natural instinct." {COL 355.1; 1900}

"The disciples did not yet understand Christ’s words concerning His relation to God. Much of His teaching was still dark to them. They had asked many questions that revealed their ignorance of God’s relation to them and to their present and future interests. CHRIST DESIRED THEM TO HAVE A CLEARER, MORE DISTINCT KNOWLEDGE OF GOD." {CCh 75.10}

"A blessed unity will be enjoyed by those who are indeed children of God. They will not, by their words and acts, lead anyone to doubt in regard to the DISTINCT PERSONALITY OF GOD, or in regard to the sanctuary and its ministry." {14MR 216.3}

"Thou shalt make no covenant with them," God had said; and those who had recently rededicated themselves to the Lord at the altar set up before the ruins of His temple, realized that the line of demarcation between His people and the world is ever to be kept UNMISTAKABLY DISTINCT. They refused to enter into alliance with those who, though familiar with the requirements of God’s law, would not yield to its claims. {PK 570.1}

"Remember in Him dwelt all the fullness of the God-head bodily. IF CHRIST IS ABIDING IN OUR HEARTS BY FAITH, we shall, by beholding the manner of His life, seek to be like Jesus, pure, peaceable, and undefiled. We shall reveal Christ in our character. We will not only receive and absorb light but will also diffuse it. WE WILL HAVE MORE CLEAR AND DISTINCT VIEWS OF WHAT JESUS IS TO US. The symmetry, loveliness, and benevolence that were in the life of Jesus Christ will be shining forth in our lives." — Manuscript 24, 1890. {2SM 22.4}

"The Lord draws out the soul in prayer, and gives us to feel His precious love. WE HAVE A NEARNESS TO HIM, AND CAN HOLD SWEET COMMUNION WITH HIM. WE OBTAIN DISTINCT VIEWS OF HIS TENDERNESS AND COMPASSION, and our hearts are broken and melted with contemplation of the love that is given to us. WE FEEL INDEED AN ABIDING CHRIST IN THE SOUL. We abide in Him, and feel at home with Jesus. The promises flow into the soul. Our peace is like a river, wave after wave of glory rolls into the heart, AND INDEED WE SUP WITH JESUS AND HE WITH US. We have a realizing sense of the love of God, and we rest in His love. No language can describe it, it is beyond knowledge. We are one with Christ, our life is hid with Christ in God. We have the assurance that when He who is our life shall appear, then shall we also

appear with Him in glory. With strong confidence, we can call God our Father."
— Letter 52, 1894, {3BC 1147.8}

"The Lord has been waiting long to impart the greatest, truest joys to the heart. All those who look to him with undivided hearts, he will greatly bless. Those who have thus looked to him have caught MORE DISTINCT VIEWS OF JESUS as their sin-bearer, their all-sufficient sacrifice, and have been hid in the cleft of the rock, to behold the Lamb of God who taketh away the sins of the world. When we have a sense of his all-sufficient sacrifice, our lips are tuned to the highest, loftiest themes of praise. When the students thus beheld Jesus, the suspension of their studies was counted as no loss. They were catching glimpses of Him who is invisible. They earnestly sought the living God, and the live coal of pardon was placed upon their lips. The Holy Spirit wrought not only for those who had lost their first love, but also for souls who had never placed themselves on the Lord's side. The holy Watcher drew these souls, that there might be an ingathering to Jesus Christ. THE HOLY SPIRIT WROUGHT SO THAT THE LORD'S PRESENCE COULD BE DISTINGUISHED, and his work acknowledged." — SpTEd 78.1

"These faithful bearers of truth had been slain by those to whom they were sent, even as the faithful servants were slain by the wicked husbandmen. In the beloved son whom the Lord of the vineyard finally sent to his disobedient servants, and whom they seized and slew, the priests and rulers suddenly saw unfolded before them, A DISTINCT PICTURE OF JESUS and his impending fate. Already they were planning to slay Him whom the Father had sent to them as a last and only appeal. In the retribution visited upon the ungrateful husbandmen was portrayed the doom of those who should slay Christ." {3SP 33.1}

In all the statements above (There are much more statements but this will suffice to make a point here), Sister White is using "distinct" to mean "clear or unmistakable" free from obscurity or ambiguity rather than to mean "separate or different".

Ellen White's own encounter with Christ or with His Spirit

"Friday, March 20, I arose early, about half past three o'clock in the morning. While writing upon the fifteenth chapter of John, suddenly a wonderful peace came upon me. The whole room seemed to be filled with the atmosphere of heaven. A holy, sacred Presence seemed to be in my room. I laid down my pen and was in a waiting attitude to see what the Spirit would say unto me. I SAW NO PERSON. I HEARD NO AUDIBLE VOICE, but a heavenly Watcher seemed close beside me. I FELT THAT I WAS IN THE PRESENCE OF JESUS. The sweet peace and light which seemed to be in my room it is impossible for me to explain or describe. A sacred, holy atmosphere surrounded me, and there were presented to my mind and understanding matters of intense interest and importance. A line of action was laid out before me AS IF THE UNSEEN PRESENCE WAS SPEAKING WITH ME. The matter I had been writing upon seemed to be lost to my mind and another matter distinctly opened before me. A great awe seemed to be upon me as matters were imprinted upon my mind." {Ms12c-1896.1}

"I arose early Thursday morning, about two o'clock, and was writing busily upon the True Vine, when I FELT A PRESENCE IN MY ROOM, as I have many times before, and I lost all recollection of what I was about. I SEEMED TO BE IN THE PRESENCE OF JESUS. HE WAS COMMUNICATING TO ME THAT WHICH I WAS TO BE INSTRUCTED. EVERYTHING WAS SO PLAIN THAT I COULD NOT MISUNDERSTAND. I was to help one whom I thought I should never again be called upon to be troubled with again. I could not understand what it meant, but at once decided not to try to reason about this, but follow the direction. Not an audible word was spoken to my ear, but to my mind. I said, "Lord, I will do as Thou hast commanded." {Lt36-1896.3}

"...While I am writing out important matter, He is beside me, helping me. He lays out my work before me, and when I am puzzled for a fit word with which to express my thought, He brings it clearly and distinctly to my mind. I feel that every time I ask, even while I am still speaking, He responds, "Here am I." {Lt127-1902.10}

These statements clearly demonstrate that, while Christ was physically in heaven, ministering in the sanctuary above, Christ Himself, not as His physical self but in the Person of His own Spirit (with the personality that is distinctly his own) appeared to Ellen White. Moreover, these accounts should dispel any notion (held by most Trinitarians) that because Christ is "cumbered with humanity" He cannot be with us even in His Spirit. As you can see from the few statements above, the way sister White interacted with Christ, though unseen, was distinctly Him. This explains such statements as, "The human agent, the seen instrument, is to preach the Word, and the LORD JESUS, THE UNSEEN AGENCY, BY HIS HOLY SPIRIT is to make the Word efficacious and powerful.—Letter 105, 1900." — (E.G. White, 2SM 18.3)

Individuality

"The two expressions human and divine were, in Christ, closely and inseparably one, and yet THEY HAD A DISTINCT INDIVIDUALITY..." {ST May 10, 1899, par. 11}

"Here we have plainly revealed to us that if we preserve the meekness and lowliness of Christ, if we walk humbly by the side of the Burden-bearer, if we come in close contact with our Redeemer, in being thus yoked up with Him, HE WILL IMPART TO US HIS OWN INDIVIDUALITY."

"It is the spirit that quickeneth; the flesh profiteth nothing; the words that I speak unto you, they are spirit, and they are life." [Jn 6:63] CHRIST IS NOT HERE REFERRING TO HIS DOCTRINE, BUT TO HIS PERSON, THE DIVINITY OF HIS CHARACTER..." {RH April 5, 1906, par. 12}



Please note above that the human and the divine nature of Christ are distinguished as the **“two expressions,”** with each having **a “distinct individuality.”** The Spirit or the “Words” that Christ speaks is described here as **“HIS PERSON, THE DIVINITY OF HIS CHARACTER.”** In other words, Christ's Spirit or His divinity has a distinct personality" that is different than His humanity (not that the “Spirit” is an entirely a different individual). Therefore, when Christ imparts his own **“individuality,”** Christ is imparting His own divinity or His own Spirit, imbued with His mind/character, coming to us through His Words, as though it is His own personal presence.

“The Holy Spirit is the SPIRIT of CHRIST; it is HIS REPRESENTATIVE. Here is the DIVINE AGENCY that carries conviction to hearts. When the power of HIS SPIRIT is revealed through the servants of God, we behold DIVINITY flashing through humanity.” — (E.G. White, 13MR 313.3, 1895)

Again, the "Holy Spirit" or the "Spirit of Christ" is distinct from Christ because HE/IT operates under a different capacity (office/agency) with different nature (the divinity of Christ, divested of humanity) compared to Christ's human personage. The Holy Spirit accomplishes what Christ cannot do physically, since it can be everywhere present, whereas Christ in his humanity accomplished what the Holy Spirit cannot do in that He identified with humanity on earth and has flesh and blood to make atonement for us in the heavenly sanctuary.

Person, Personality, Office, Agency

Holy Spirit is characterized as a person, personality, of having an office or is describe as an agency.

Following definitions are taken from of Noah Webster 1828 Dictionary, a dictionary which Ellen White had in her library.

person (noun)

Definition 6 "Character of office.

How different is the same man from himself, as he sustains the person of magistrate and that of a friend."

personality (noun)

"That which constitutes an individual a distinct person, or that which constitutes individuality. The personality of an intelligent being extends itself beyond present existence to what is past, only by consciousness."

office (noun)

Definition 2 "A duty, charge or trust of a sacred nature, conferred by God Himself; as the office of the priest, in the Old Testament; and that of the apostles, in the New Testament"

agency (noun)

Definition "1. The quality of moving or or exerting power; the state of being in action; action; operation; instrumentality; as, the agency of providence in the natural world."

Definition "2. The OFFICE of an agent, or factor; business of an agent entrusted with the concerns of another; as, the principal pays the charges of agency."

"The Holy Spirit exalts and glorifies the Saviour. It is his OFFICE to present Christ, the purity of his righteousness, and the great salvation that we have through him. Jesus says, "He shall receive of mine, and shall show it unto you." [John 16:14.] The Spirit of truth is the only effectual teacher of divine truth. How must God esteem the human race, since he gave his Son to die for them, and appoints HIS SPIRIT to be man's teacher and continual guide." — CE 59.2 • EGW

When Ellen White speaks of the office of the Holy Spirit, She is speaking of none other than God appointing His own Spirit.

"[1] The incarnation of Christ, [2] HIS DIVINITY, [3] His atonement, [4] His wonderful life in heaven as our advocate, [5] the OFFICE of the Holy Spirit— all these vital themes of Christianity are revealed from Genesis to Revelation. Each is a golden link in the perfect chain of truth. Why, then, should not the Scriptures be exalted in every school in our land?" — {CT, p. 427.3} EGW (brackets supplied)

Before she says, "all these vital themes of Christianity," she lists:

1. "The incarnation of Christ,
2. "HIS DIVINITY,"
3. "His atonement,"
4. "His wonderful life in heaven as our advocate,"
5. "the OFFICE of the Holy Spirit"

Folks, in light of what we've been reviewing, it's not that difficult to see that all the "vital themes" mentioned in the above quote refers to Christ and His divine activities; He is the one who will "IMPART TO US HIS OWN INDIVIDUALITY" which is "THE DIVINITY OF HIS CHARACTER" {RH April 5, 1906, par. 12} via His own Spirit.

The "agency" or the "office" therefore which Ellen White speaks of does NOT connote "another being" but rather an "operational distinction" that defines the "character of it's office." The agency of the Holy Spirit brings with it the personality of Christ's divinity that is distinctly different than Christ's humanity. And this is precisely the reason why the Inspiration, both Scripture and the Spirit of Prophecy, gives personal attributes to the Holy Spirit.

Personal attributes applied to the Holy Spirit

THE HOLY SPIRIT SPEAKS...

- He "expressly says" that some will depart from the faith - 1 Timothy 4:1
- The Spirit spoke and gave directions to Philip - Acts 8:29
- He spoke to Peter and gave him charge concerning the Gentiles - Acts 10:19-20
- He spoke to the brethren at Antioch concerning Paul and Barnabas - Acts 13:1-4

THE HOLY SPIRIT TEACHES...

- He was to teach the apostles all things - John 14:26
- Please note that Jesus consistently refers to the Holy Spirit as "He", not "it" (implying a personal being, not an impersonal force) - cf. Jn 14:16-17

THE HOLY SPIRIT BEARS WITNESS...

- He was to testify of Jesus - John 15:26-27

THE HOLY SPIRIT GUIDES, HEARS, SPEAKS, TELLS...

- He would carry on and complete the work started by Jesus - John 16:12-13
- Jesus consistently refers to the Holy Spirit as "He"

THE HOLY SPIRIT FORBIDS...

- He prevented Paul and his companions from going into certain areas of Asia - Acts 16:6- This He did by "forbidding" them, and "not permitting" them, despite their initial efforts

THE HOLY SPIRIT INTERCEDES...

The "Spirit Himself makes intercession for us" - Romans 8:26; Just as Christ "also makes intercession for us" - Romans 8:34

HE HAS A MIND and HAS KNOWLEDGE...

- "the mind of the Spirit" - Romans 8:27; This suggests thinking on His own
- He "knows the things of God" - 1 Corinthians 2:11

HE POSSESSES AFFECTION...

- Paul speaks of "the love of the Spirit" - Romans 15:30

HE HAS A WILL...

- "selfsame Spirit, dividing to every man severally as he will. - 1 Corinthians 12:11; The Spirit decides what person received which gift.

THE HOLY SPIRIT SUFFERS PERSONAL SLIGHTS AND INJURIES

HE CAN BE GRIEVED AND INSULTED

- "do not grieve the Holy Spirit of God" - Ephesians 4:30
- One who has "who hath trodden under foot the Son of God" has also "hath done despite unto the Spirit of grace?" - He 10:29

HE CAN BE LIED TO...

"...why has Satan filled your heart to lie to the Holy Spirit...?" - Acts 5:3; As Ananias and his wife Sapphira were guilty of doing.

The Word of God reveals clearly that the attributes of life and the personhood are applied directly to the Holy Spirit. Why should it be a surprise to any of us that God has a living Spirit and that It operates throughout the universe as a living Person, interacting with angels and men on His behalf? Even the human spirit has amazing abilities that we cannot fully explain so then how much more so God's Spirit, especially since He can project It outside of His bodily presence. And especially since It is more than just Himself but also the Spirit of His Son? The point here is that the Bible evidence clearly affirms

what Mrs. White's wrote and it shows that referring to the Holy Spirit as one of "three living persons of the heavenly trio" (Ms21-1906.11) or "the third person of the Godhead" (DA 671) or as "a person" (Ev 616.6) or having "a personality", and that "he must also be a divine person" (Manuscript 20, 1906; Ev 617.1) are all very much appropriate, but not to be understood as a separate being.

Two kinds of "personally"

"I testify to my brethren and sisters that the church of Christ, enfeebled and defective as it may be, is the only object on earth on which He bestows His supreme regard. While He extends to all the world His invitation to come to Him and be saved, He commissions His angels to render divine help to every soul that cometh to Him in repentance and contrition, and HE COMES PERSONALLY BY HIS HOLY SPIRIT into the midst of His church." {CET 206.1}

"The Holy Spirit is Christ's representative, but divested of the personality of humanity, and independent thereof. Cumbered with humanity, CHRIST COULD NOT BE IN EVERY PLACE PERSONALLY. Therefore it was for their interest that He should go to the Father, and send the Spirit to be His successor on earth. No one could then have any advantage because of his location or his personal contact with Christ. By the Spirit the Saviour would be accessible to all. In this sense He would be nearer to them than if He had not ascended on high." {DA 669.2}

The second quotation comes from The Desire of Ages p. 669, and it is often cited to affirm that Christ cannot be the Holy Spirit because He is **"cumbered with humanity"** and therefore He **"could not be in every place personally."** And yet we find in the preceding quotation that Christ does come **"personally by HIS Holy Spirit."**

In light of what we've looked at thus far, the first quote above, **"He comes personally by His Holy Spirit,"** is referring to Christ's divinity, **"divested of the personality of humanity,"** as explained by the second quote. The Desire of Ages statement about the Holy Spirit being Christ's "representative" do not necessarily necessitate that it has to be an entirely different individual. **"Personally,"** therefore, can logically apply to either humanity or divinity of a same Person. In other words, you can say, Christ could not come **personally** in His humanity (physical/visible) for the reasons cited but He can certainly come **personally** by His Spirit (invisible divine power/presence, devoid of the personality of humanity).

Conclusion

Thus, "He [Holy Spirit] personifies Christ, yet is a distinct personality" can be understood as:

Ellen White used expressions like "Person", "Personality" to describe the Holy Spirit for the Holy Spirit is the very personal power and presence of the Father through the Son but divested of the corporeal personality.

Therefore, when the Father, through Christ, sends His Spirit (embodying the victorious humanity of the Man Christ), it is not just some impersonal force or essence pervading through space. No, it is very personal and intimate and distinct.

Holy Spirit is imbued with the very mind, power and the presence of the Father and His Son and yet with a distinct (incorporeal) personality. Therefore, it would make perfect sense why she would describe the Holy Spirit as *having* a “distinct personality” but not to be understood as an entirely separate God Being.

We also need to be mindful that the "person" theology protects and guards us from spiritualistic interpretation of the personality of God.

Ellen White was clear that the Holy Spirit was the divine activity of God and of Christ apart from where They are bodily located. Please consider that there are volumes of statements by Sister White clearly describing the Holy Spirit as the Spirit of Christ. Below are just a few:

“After the Saviour’s ascension, THE SENSE OF THE DIVINE PRESENCE, FULL OF LOVE AND LIGHT, WAS STILL WITH THEM. IT WAS A PERSONAL PRESENCE. Jesus, the Saviour, who had walked and talked and prayed with them, who had spoken hope and comfort to their hearts, had, while the message of peace was upon His lips, been taken from them into heaven. As the chariot of angels received Him, His words had come to them, “Lo, I am with you alway, even unto the end.” Matthew 28:20. He had ascended to heaven in the form of humanity. They knew that He was before the throne of God, their Friend and Saviour still; that His sympathies were unchanged; that He would forever be identified with suffering humanity. They knew that He was presenting before God the merit of His blood, showing His wounded hands and feet as a remembrance of the price He had paid for His redeemed ones; and this thought strengthened them to endure reproach for His sake. Their union with Him was stronger now than when He was with them in person. THE LIGHT AND LOVE AND POWER OF AN INDWELLING CHRIST shone out through them, so that men, beholding, marveled.” {AA 65.1}

“Cumbered with humanity, Christ could not be in every place personally; therefore it was altogether for their advantage that he should leave them, go to his Father, and send the Holy Spirit to be his successor on earth. THE HOLY SPIRIT IS HIMSELF, DIVESTED OF THE PERSONALITY OF HUMANITY, and independent thereof. HE WOULD REPRESENT HIMSELF AS PRESENT in all places by HIS HOLY SPIRIT, AS OMNIPRESENT.” -Manuscript Releases, vol. 14, p. 93;

“This [Holy Spirit] refers to the omnipresence of the SPIRIT OF CHRIST, called the COMFORTER. Again Jesus says, “I have yet many things to say unto you, but ye cannot bear them now. Howbeit when He, the Spirit of truth is come, He will guide you into all truth” [John 16:12, 13]. Manuscript Releases vol.14 p. 179 {14MR 179.2}

“Let them study the seventeenth of John, and learn how to pray and how to live the prayer of CHRIST. HE IS THE Comforter. He will abide in their hearts, making their joy full.” — (E.G. White, RH, Jan 27, 1903)

“Once it was my privilege to speak in a smaller tent, which was crowded full of young men and young women. Soon after I began speaking, older ones tried to crowd in. I had great freedom, and the tender Spirit of God was with me. The Saviour seemed to be close beside me. I dwelt upon the Christian experience to be gained from the ministration of the Holy Spirit promised in the twenty-eighth chapter of Matthew. All hearts were touched. I was much refreshed and strengthened. It is the earnest of the spirit of life through Christ that every soul needs now, just now. There is not the least excuse now for any one’s departing from the faith, giving heed to seducing spirits and doctrines of devils. Those who follow their own sophistries do this from their own choice, in the face of light and evidence. THE LORD JESUS RECOGNIZES THE REAL VALUE OF SINCERE BELIEF IN HIS PERSONALITY, WHICH THO UNSEEN, IS VIEWED BY THE EYE OF FAITH.” (Letter 248-1906.4)

“A LIAR IS ONE THAT PRESENTS FALSE THEORIES AND DOCTRINES. HE WHO DENIES THE PERSONALITY OF GOD AND OF HIS SON JESUS CHRIST IS DENYING GOD AND CHRIST. “If that which ye have heard from the beginning shall remain in you, ye also shall continue in the Son and in the Father.” IF YOU CONTINUE TO BELIEVE AND OBEY THE TRUTHS YOU FIRST EMBRACED REGARDING THE PERSONALITY OF THE FATHER AND THE SON, YOU WILL BE JOINED TOGETHER WITH THEM IN LOVE. There will be seen that union for which Christ prayed just before His trial and crucifixion:” {Ms23-1906.20}

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