

Person, Office, and Ellen White

By [Dean Bowen](#) on [Saturday, 23 July 2011 at 20:58](#)

What meaning did Ellen White attach to the word 'Person'? It clearly is not that of a 'Being' or an 'Individual'. We know this for the following exclusionary reasons. She told us the following:

“The only being who was one with God lived the law in humanity, descended to the lowly life of a common laborer, and toiled at the carpenter's bench with his earthly parent.” {EGW, ST, October 14, 1897 par. 3}

Clearly if she meant 'person' to be 'being' then we are either left with a contradiction here or the Spirit is somehow not "one" with God, which is absurd. How about individual? Notice this:

"... From eternity there was a complete unity between the Father and the Son. THEY WERE TWO, YET LITTLE SHORT OF BEING IDENTICAL; TWO IN INDIVIDUALITY, YET ONE IN SPIRIT, AND HEART, AND CHARACTER." {YI, December 16, 1897 par. 5}

Here we see the number of the Godhead limited to two again, and spirit on the same par as heart and character. Was there any confusion at the time of Ellen White over her use of the word "person"? Absolutely. How do we know that? When J.H. Kellogg produced his "Alpha of Deadly Heresies", he based it on his newfound beliefs in the trinity which he had learned from his new trinitarian Seventh-day Baptist wife's pastor. When Ellen White put him in check, he could not understand it. He voiced his confusion over it and could not understand her use of the word 'person' as we see in this letter:

“How the Holy Ghost can be the third person and not be a person at all is difficult for me to see” (Letter, Kellogg to G. I Butler, October 28th 1903)

So what did she mean by "person" a clue is found in the Webster's 1828 dictionary from her study:

Noah Webster's 1828 English Dictionary

PERSON, n. per'sn. [L. persona; said to be compounded of per, through or by, and sonus, sound; a Latin word signifying primarily a mask used by actors on the stage.]

Meaning #6. Character of office.

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

The question is, did she ever use the word "office" as well as "person" to describe the Holy Spirit? It is a reasonable question if they are in fact equivalent. Well it turns out not only that she did, but in close proximity to some of her most famous quotations, ones which trinitarians use most frequently to try to prove the error that she was somehow a trinitarian which she was not. Notice the favorite quote of some:

To my brethren in America:---

The great office work of the Holy Spirit is thus distinctly specified by our Saviour, "And when He is come, He will reprove the world of sin." Christ knew that this announcement was a wonderful truth. He was nearing the close of His ministry upon this earth, and was standing in view of the cross, with a full realization of the load of guilt that must be placed upon Him as the sin-bearer. Yet His greatest anxiety was for His disciples. He was seeking to find solace for them, and He told them, "Nevertheless I tell you the truth; It is expedient for you that I go away; for if I go not away, the Comforter will not come unto you; but if I depart, I will send Him unto you." (John 16:7) {1888 1493.1}

Evil had been accumulating for centuries, and could only be restrained and resisted by the mighty power of the Holy Spirit, the third person of the Godhead, who would come with no modified energy, but in the fulness of divine power. Another spirit must be met; for the essence of evil was working in all ways, and the submission of man to this Satanic captivity was amazing. {1888 1493.2}

Here are a few more:

*How necessary that this mine of truth be explored, and the precious treasures of truth be discovered and secured as rich jewels. The incarnation of Christ His divinity, His atonement, His wonderful life in heaven as our Advocate, **the office of the Holy Spirit**, all these living, vital themes of Christianity are revealed from Genesis to Revelation. The golden links of truth form a chain of evangelical truth, and the first and staple link is found in the great teachings of Christ Jesus. Why then should not the Scriptures be ennobled and exalted in every school in our Land?. . . . {SpM 12.1}*

***The Sun of Righteousness shines into our hearts to give the knowledge of the glory of Jesus Christ. Of the Holy Spirit's office He says, "He shall glorify Me: for He shall receive of Mine, and shall show it unto you."** The psalmist prays, "Purge me with hyssop, and I shall be clean: wash me, and I shall be whiter than snow. . . . Create in me a clean heart, O God; and renew a right spirit within me. Cast me not away from Thy presence: and take not Thy Holy Spirit from me. Restore unto me the joy of Thy salvation; and uphold me with Thy free Spirit. Then will I teach transgressors Thy ways; and sinners shall be converted unto Thee." {1888 1340.1}*

*The men that should have been years in advance of what they are, who should have learned of God, humbling their hearts before him, catching the Spirit of Christ, raising their voices in warning, and giving the trumpet a certain sound, have no cause to triumph now. God will hold them responsible for the good they might have done had they kept pace with the messages God has given and did not do. If they had day by day been imbued by his Spirit, they might have done the very work that has been done by their brethren whom they have criticized and condemned. That which is essential for the promulgation of truth is the gift of the Holy Spirit, which is to guide and lead and to keep the soul from Satan's deceptive power in these last days of snare and delusion. The Holy Spirit must do a work for human intelligences that is scarcely yet comprehended by human minds. New aspects of truth are to be opened to our view. O the riches of the word of God are but dimly appreciated. **Unless the Holy Spirit shall do its office work upon the human heart, the character will not be developed after the divine similitude.** {1888 1249.1}*

There are more, but I must stop for now. Add a few of your own in comments.