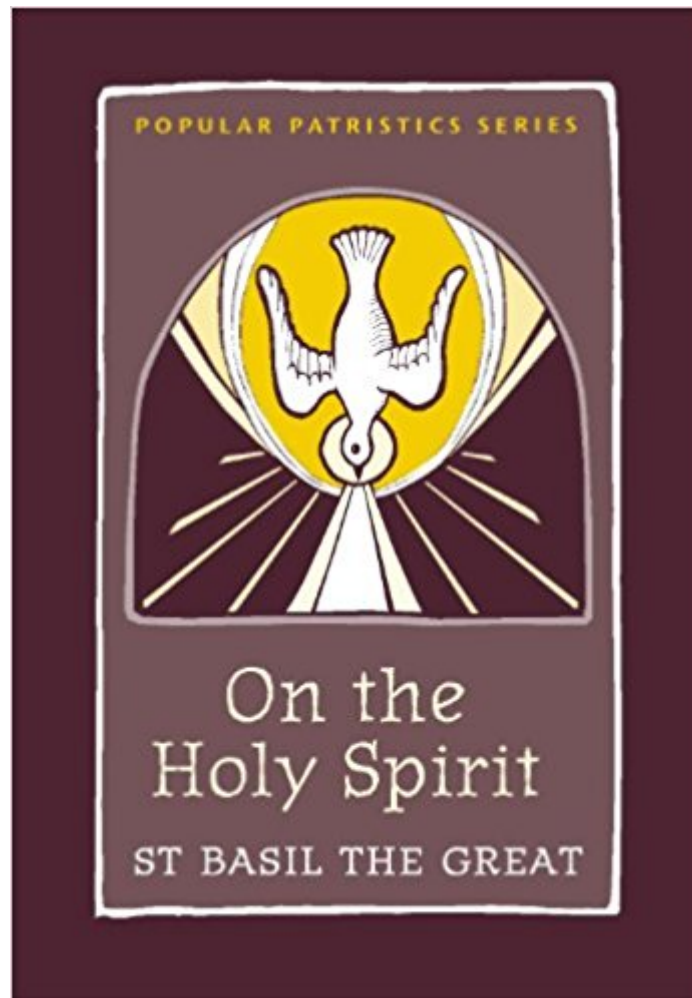




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# On The Holy Spirit: St. Basil The Great (Popular Patristics)



## Synopsis

This volume presents a new translation of St Basil's On the Holy Spirit, a classic expression of the Church's faith in the Spirit, and a lasting testimony to the author's Christian erudition. In the words of St Gregory the Theologian, St Basil's treatise was written by a pen borrowed from the Spirit's store. This work sets forth the distinction of the divine Persons, and their perpetual communion and conjunction. It talks also about the nature of theological language, and the theological significance of the Church's tradition of worship and proclamation. Although the book was written for St Basil's fourth-century contemporaries, its message is valid for all ages.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

PLASED

Bad edition - typos, hard to read, no scripture references and not the one my professor wanted.

Basil the Great was one of the three Cappadocians, Bishops and theologians who supported and advanced the doctrine of the Trinity, when it was under attack between the Council of Nicea and the Council of Chalcedon. Basil was a polished writer, having studied in Athens, with Gregory Nazianzus. The first thing which strikes one is the emphasis Basil places on the analysis of prepositions. Unlike English, French, and German, to my knowledge, preposition change their meaning depending on the case of their usage in the text. The same preposition "meta-" can mean

"with, amid, or among" if the context is genitive, while it means "after or behind" if the context is accusative (or as it appears as a prefix for such words as "metaphysics".) Basil suggests many writers get these subtleties of meaning a bit mixed up. As you read the Cappadocians and others of the period, they sound more and more like modern linguistic philosophers, making arguments on how the terms are used by pastors in the sanctuary. What is remarkable is the extent to which Basil and the other Cappadocians come so close to virtually quoting Plato, especially his "Myth of the Cave" in Book Seven of "The Republic." Basil's main argument is that as long as you assume the Holy Spirit is part of the Trinity, none of the way of speaking about it devalues its role in comparison to The Father and The Son. It is co-equal in importance to the other two. He cites his well-known metaphor that the Spirit is akin to the heat of a branding iron, a property of that rod, but not of its essence. Like his fellow Cappadocians, he spends much time on the connection between the body and the soul, and how one can be saved when the other dies and decomposes. One of the most rewarding things about studying the Cappadocians is that you do not get the sense that the orthodox and the heretical divisions of Christianity were at one another's throats. That comes later. Here, it may not be unlike modern ELCA Lutherans arguing with Missouri synod members. Both sides were devout and largely shared the same scriptures. It is a great boon to have these little treatises from these giants of the fourth century, so we can determine easily the strains of fourth century theology.

A wonderfully clear translation which allows you to hear the voice of the original author. This translation truly allows the reader to feel as if he is hearing the author himself speaking. This is particularly amazing since St. Basil wrote over 1600 years ago. On the Holy Spirit is a survey of the scriptural passages (Old and New Testament) which explain and illustrate the nature of the Holy Spirit, that he is divine and co-equal to the Father and the Son. St. Basil wrote this before the Nicean Council, which was convened to discuss the relationship of the three Persons of the Trinity, so it is very scholarly. It is a good companion for those who would like to study the bible on these topics, but also for those who would like to have a thorough understanding of the arguments against the co-equal divinity of the Holy Spirit circulating at the time. I will read more from this translator because he does not inject his voice into the translation as far as I can determine.

If one is to grasp the significance of the first Council of Nicaea we must familiarize ourselves with the writings and beliefs of the time. Saint (Bishop of Caesarea and Cappadocia) Basil is a man who was at the center of much of the formative events of this time. Are you seeking to understand the

faith and beliefs of our first and second century brothers and sisters in Christ? This book contains glimpses of these concepts, thoughts, ideology and faith of Bishop Basil who was one of the giants of his time. We, believers in Christ of the 21st century, need to refresh our memories of a time when our faith began a serious attempt to communicate the truth of the message of Jesus to an ever widening group of people.

I liked this work from Basil. I read it as I'm researching the Trinity for my MTh. Recommended to understand why the Spirit is considered to have full and complete divinity along with the Father and the Son. It is a classic on the subject. It is not long (100 pages but the book isn't large) and Hildebrand provides a helpful introduction (ca. 15 pages) to the letter so as to put the writing in its context and make it more understandable. For those interested in the divinity of the Spirit or the Trinity, Basil provides theological acumen with patristic scriptural exegesis.

Of great importance to see how the Church came to know and defend the revealed GOD. Debate that is old touches on questions of faith with us today. Did not understand all but it advanced my journey as a catholic with greater faith

Great book easy read.

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