

In Acts 13:1-5, the Holy Spirit acts as a Person. He spoke to the leaders of the church at Antioch. He instructed them, “Now separate to Me Barnabas and Saul for the work to which I have called them.” (v.2) Notice the personal references “to Me” and “I.” The Holy Spirit, along with the Antioch leaders sent out the missionaries. (vss. 3, 4) There are many other contexts in which the Holy Spirit is shown to be a Person.

Response: Here the holy spirit is being used as a means of communication by the Lord. I might say, ‘The radio said that there is going to be rain today.’ Do you conclude from this that the radio is a person? Or that a person is utilizing this mode of communication?

In the incident of the burning bush the text says at Exodus 3:2, 4, 6, “*And the angel of Yahweh appeared to [Moses] in a flame of fire out of the midst of a bush... God called to him out of the bush... ‘I am the God of your father, the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob.’*” So here the angel is uttering the words, “*I am the God*” etc. as God’s representative, not that he is personally God. Also, consider the account of Moses’ receiving of the Law. (Exodus 20 ff.) It appears that God was personally speaking to him. Yet Acts 7:53 says that the Law was delivered by angels. So to portray the holy spirit as speaking in the first person in behalf of the Lord is consistent with Biblical usage.

Trinitarians might counter that even as the angels who spoke on God’s behalf are persons, so the holy spirit must also be a person. But do trinitarians believe that the angels constitute a multi-personned God? As for proving the holy spirit’s personality by its ability to speak and the use of the personal pronoun, consider Luke 11:49, “*Therefore also the Wisdom of God said, ‘I will send them prophets and apostles, some of whom they will kill and persecute.’*” Here the Wisdom of God is portrayed as speaking and using the pronoun *I*. Should we now conclude that there is a fourth person in the Godhead, namely, God the Wisdom?