

Personal Pronouns and the Holy Spirit

John 14:17 (Actual Greek w/ Strong's Numbers)

τὸ Πνεῦμα τῆς ἀληθείας ἃς ὁ κόσμος οὐ δύναται λαβεῖν
 9999 3588 4151 3588 225 3739 3588 2889 3756 1410 2983
 {Even} the Spirit of truth; whom the world cannot receive
ὅτι οὐ θεωρεῖ αὐτὸ οὐδὲ γινώσκει **Ὁμῶς γινώσχετε αὐτὸ**
 3754 3756 2334 846 3761 1097 9999 5210 1097 846
 because not it seeth him neither knoweth {but} ye know him;
ὅτι παρῶν ἡμῶν μένει καὶ ἐν ἡμῶν ἔσται.
 3754 3844 5213 3306 2532 1722 5213 2071
 for with you he dwelleth, and in you shall be. **(KJV)**

John 14:17 {that is} the Spirit⁴¹⁵¹ of truth, whom the world cannot receive, because it does not behold Him⁸⁴⁶ or know Him, {but} you know Him⁸⁴⁶ because He abides with you, and will be in you. **(NAS)**

John 14:17 the Spirit⁴¹⁵¹ of truth. The world cannot accept him, because it neither sees him nor knows him⁸⁴⁶. But you know him⁸⁴⁶, for he lives with you and will be in you. **(NIV)**

John 14:17 "the Spirit⁴¹⁵¹ of truth, whom the world cannot receive, because it neither sees Him nor knows Him; but you know Him⁸⁴⁶, for He dwells with you and will be in you. **(NKJ)**

John 14:17 even the Spirit⁴¹⁵¹ of truth, whom the world cannot receive, because it neither sees him nor knows him; you know him⁸⁴⁶, for he dwells with you, and will be in you. **(RSV)**

John 14:17 He is the Holy Spirit, the Spirit⁴¹⁵¹ who leads into all truth. The world at large cannot receive him, for it isn't looking for him⁸⁴⁶ and doesn't recognize him. But you do, for he lives with you now and some day shall be in you. **(TLB)**

John 14:17 (even) the Spirit⁴¹⁵¹ of truth: whom the world cannot receive; for it beholdeth him not, neither knoweth him⁸⁴⁶: ye know him; for he abideth with you, and shall be in you. **(ASV)**

4151 pneuma (pnyoo'-mah); from **4154**; a current of air, i.e. breath (blast) or a breeze; by analogy or figuratively, a spirit, i.e. (human) the rational soul, (by implication) vital principle, mental disposition, etc., or (superhuman) an angel, demon, or (divine) God, Christ's spirit, the Holy Spirit:

KJV-- ghost, life, spirit (-ual, -ually), mind. Compare 5590. [Strong's Definition]

4151 pneuma- [Thayer's Definition]

- 1) a movement of air (a gentle blast)
 - a) used of the wind, hence the wind itself
 - b) the breath of the nostrils (the mouth)
- 2) the spirit, that is, the vital principle by which the body is animated
 - a) the rational spirit, the power by which the human being feels, thinks, decides
 - b) the soul
- 3) a spirit, that is, a simple essence, devoid of all or at least all grosser matter, and possessed of the power of knowing, desiring, deciding, and acting
 - a) a life giving spirit
 - b) a human soul that has left the body
 - c) a spirit higher than man but lower than God, that is, an angel
 - 1) used of demons, or evil spirits, who were conceived as inhabiting the bodies of men
 - 2) the spiritual nature of Christ, higher than the highest angels and equal to God, the divine nature of Christ
- 4) the Spirit of God
 - a) God's power and agency distinguishable in thought from His essence in itself considered:
 - 1) manifest in the course of affairs
 - 2) by its influence upon the souls productive in the theocratic body (the church) of all the higher spiritual gifts and blessings
 - 3) the third person of the Trinity, the Holy Spirit

5) the disposition or influence which fills and governs the soul of anyone; the efficient source of any power, affection, emotion, desire, etc.

846 autos- [Thayer's Definition]

- 1) himself, herself, themselves, itself
- 2) he, she, it
- 3) the same (Wigram's frequency count is 4,913 not 5,117).

846 autos (ow-tos'); from the particle au [perhaps akin to the base of **109** through the idea of a baffling wind] (backward); the reflexive pronounself, used (alone or in the comparative **1438**) of the third person and (with the proper personal pronoun) of the other persons:

KJV-- her, it (-self), one, the other, (mine) own, said, ([self-], the) same, ([him-, my-, thyself, [your-] selves, she, that, their (-s), them ([-selves]), there [-at, -by, -in, -into, -of, -on, -with], they, (these) things, this (man), those, together, very, which. Compare 848. [Strong's Definition]

HE

Note: *This pronoun is generally part of the translation of a verb.* Frequently it translates the article before nouns, adjectives, numerals, adverbs, prepositional phrases and the participial form of verbs. Apart from these it translates one of the following:

1. **autos** ^846^, "he himself and no other," emphatic, e. g., <Matt. 1:21>, where the RV brings out the emphasis by the rendering "it is He"; <3:11> (last clause), where the repeated "He" brings out the emphasis; in some cases it can be marked only by a circumlocution which would not constitute a translation, e. g., <8:24>; this use is very frequent, especially in the Gospels, the epistles of John and the Apocalypse; see also, e. g., <Eph. 2:14; 4:11; 5:23,27>. See SAME, SELF, THIS, VERY.

(from Vine's Expository Dictionary of Biblical Words, Copyright (C) 1985, Thomas Nelson Publishers)

Pronouns have many different uses in Greek. One of the most common pronouns is **autos**. Its ordinary use is to "stand in" for a noun to avoid repetition. "James loved Mary, but Mary couldn't stand James" reduces to "James loved Mary, but she couldn't stand him".

In English: (the third person personal pronoun is used like this)

	Masculine	Feminine	Neuter
Subjective:	he	he	it
Possessive:	his	her	its
Objective:	him	her	it

The only significant difference between the third person pronouns and the first and second is that the third person singular pronouns HAVE GENDER. The GENDER and NUMBER of pronouns are determined by the GENDER and NUMBER of the antecedent, and their case is determined by their function in the sentence.

In Greek:

	Masc	Fem	Neut	Translation		
Nominative:	autos	aute	auto	he	she	it
Gentive:	autou	outes	autou	his	her	its
Dative:	auto	aute	auto	to him	to her	to it
Accusative:	auton	auten	auto	him	her	it

We refer to *autos* in reference in its function as a personal pronoun. This is because of its translation in terms of the Holy Spirit as “he” and not “it”. The words in John 14:17 in reference to the Holy Spirit is “*auto*”, what would appear to be the neuter nominative case of the third personal pronoun. So, if He is PERSONAL and not IMPERSONAL. or masculine versus feminine, why would AUTO be used and not AUTOS???

In this use (as a pronoun), the gender of the Greek pronoun (*autos* in this case) is determined NOT BY NATURAL GENDER but BY THE GENDER of the ANTECEDENT. For example, if the antecedent is “world”, which is *kosmos* in Greek, you would use the masculine form of the pronoun (*autos*). However, you would not translate *autos* as “he” but as “it”. We think of the world not as a “he” but as an “it”. The translation of the of the pronoun is therefore based on the natural gender of the Greek noun.

Why is the pronoun for the Holy Spirit “it” and not “he” then? Because *pneuma*, the Greek noun in this sentence, which is translated here as “Spirit”, is the ANTECEDENT of the pronoun “*auto*”. The word *pneuma* is NEUTER in Greek, and therefore, its pronoun SHOULD be rendered “*auto*”, the NEUTER third person pronoun in Greek. However, the English translation would be rendered based on the NATURAL GENDER of the word being reference, in this case the Holy Spirit.

How do we then know that the Holy Spirit is masculine, i.e. and therefore PERSONAL. Rom 8:26 is another place where “*auto*” is used as the pronoun for the Spirit, and this is still because the antecedent is a NEUTER noun in the Greek:

Rom 8:26 And in the same way the Spirit also helps our weakness; for we do not know how to pray as we should, but the *Spirit*⁴¹⁵¹ [**Pneúma**] **Himself**⁸⁴⁶ [**auto**] intercedes for {us} with groanings too deep for words; (NAS)
pneuma = neuter; therefore auto = neuter, i.e. “itself” [KJV]

John 14:17 and Rom 8:26 are confusing only because of our inability to express English perfectly into Greek. However... every other instance of personal pronoun usage in reference to the Holy Spirit is MASCULINE, i.e. and therefore personal.

John 16:7 "But I tell you the truth, it is to your advantage that I go away; for if I do not go away, the *Helper*³⁸⁷⁵ [**parakleetos**] shall not come to you; but if I go, I will send **Him**¹⁵⁶⁵ [**auton**] to you. (NAS)
parakleetos = masculine, therefore auton = masculine, i.e. “him”

- John 16:8 "And **He**¹⁵⁶⁵ [**eikinos**], when He comes, will **convict**¹⁶⁵¹ [**elengxei**] the world concerning sin, and righteousness, and judgment; (NAS)
parakleetos = masculine, therefore **eikinos = masculine, i.e. "he"**
elengxei = masculine form of "he will convict"
- John 16:13 "But when **He**¹⁵⁶⁵ [**eikinos**], the Spirit of truth, comes, He will guide³⁵⁹⁴ [**hodeegeesei**] you into all the truth; for He will not speak²⁹⁸⁰ [**laleesei**] on His own initiative (of Himself ¹⁴³⁸ [**heautou**]), but whatever He hears¹⁹¹ [**akousei**], He will speak²⁹⁸⁰ [**laleesei**]; and He will disclose³¹² [**anangelei**] to you what is to come. (NAS)
hodeegeesei, laleesei, akousei, anangelei = masculine conjugations that combine "him" with the verb
heautou = masculine, "Himself"
- Acts 13:2 And while they were ministering to the Lord and fasting, the Holy Spirit said, "Set apart for Me³⁴²⁷ Barnabas and Saul for the work to which I have called them." (NAS)
3427 moi (moy): KJV-- I, me, mine, my. = 1st Person
- John 14:26 "But the **Helper**³⁸⁷⁵ [**parakleetos**], the **Holy Spirit**⁴¹⁵¹ [**Pneúma**], whom the Father will send in My name, **He**¹⁵⁶⁵ [**eikinos**] will teach you all things, and bring to your remembrance all that I said to you." (NAS)
parakleetos = masculine, therefore **eikinos = masculine, i.e. "he"**
- John 15:26 "When the **Helper**³⁸⁷⁵ [**parakleetos**] comes, whom I will send to you from the Father, {that is} the **Spirit**⁴¹⁵¹ [**Pneúma**] of truth, who proceeds from the Father, **He**¹⁵⁶⁵ [**eikinos**] will bear witness of Me, (NAS)
parakleetos = masculine, therefore **eikinos = masculine, i.e. "he"**