

Dr. Robert A. Peterson, Holy Spirit and Union with Christ, Session 1, The Holy Spirit is a Person

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This is Dr. Robert Peterson in his teaching on the Holy Spirit and Union with Christ. This is session 1, The Holy Spirit is a Person.

Welcome to our course on the Holy Spirit and union with Christ. Let's pray before we even do anything else. Father, thank you for your word, for your spirit, for your Son.

Teach us, we pray. Encourage us. Correct us where we would need that.

Lead us in your everlasting way, we pray, through Jesus Christ, the mediator. Amen. Union with Christ is a most wonderful and perplexing doctrine, and to understand it, we need first of all to think about God, the Holy Spirit, and his ministries.

So, we'll cover the person of the Holy Spirit, the deity of the Holy Spirit, and then his works, and his main ministry, which is in salvation, is joining people to Christ. Then we will move on to foundations for union with Christ, Lord willing, in the Old Testament, Synoptic Gospels, and Acts. That is material that is rarely talked about.

Then, there is union with Christ in John's Gospel, and then, of course, the crown, union with Christ in Paul, working with texts, language, and literature, and Paul's pictures and themes. Briefly, union with Christ and the overall biblical story, and lastly, Lord willing, union with Christ and systematic theology. But to get things going, if I were to define union with Christ, I would do it in a Trinitarian fashion.

Salvation is planned by God, accomplished by God, and applied by God. Salvation is planned before the creation of the world, Ephesians 1:4, 2 Timothy 1:9, by the Trinity, especially by the Father in electing a people for himself. Yet the people whom he chooses are not saved before the creation of the world because they didn't exist.

So, salvation is not only planned by God but it's accomplished by the Trinity, especially the Son, in the first century. Everything from his incarnation, the second coming, which, of course, goes way beyond the first century, is included in his saving work, but the heart and soul of Jesus' saving accomplishment is his death and resurrection. And they, indeed, are first-century historical events.

Salvation was planned by the Father in eternity, and salvation was accomplished by the Son in the first century, but still, although some of us are long in the tooth, we weren't alive in the first century. So, God applies salvation, and this is the work of the Trinity, especially this Holy Spirit, to God's people in history during their life stories. This is called the application of salvation.

So, salvation planned, election before creation, especially the Father's work, salvation accomplished, the death and resurrection of the Redeemer in the first century, then salvation applied, the work of the Trinity, but most especially the Holy Spirit in regeneration and calling and initial sanctification and faith and repentance, justification, adoption, and perseverance. All those things are the application of salvation, and I have another way to say it in summary, and that is union with Christ. Each of those doctrines I mentioned happens in union with Christ.

In other words, when God joins us spiritually to his Son, we gain all of his saving benefits, including justification, calling, repentance, faith, adoption, justification, and so forth, sanctification, and so forth. So, a brief definition of union with Christ is the powerful work of God, the Holy Spirit, in joining the people of God, chosen by God, redeemed by the Son, in actually connecting those people to Christ in salvation, linking them to him, and uniting them. The Spirit unites believers.

Union with Christ follows faith in the Scriptures, at least in the narrow sense. In the broad sense, it's this broad canopy because election was in him, and the part of the Christian life, the dynamo, is we died with him, we were buried with him, we were raised with him, and so forth, but especially the Spirit connects us to Jesus and all of his saving benefits. That is union with Christ.

Being joined to him, the living Christ, we gain salvation in all of its technicolor. Before starting to talk about the Holy Spirit, who is the prime mover in union with Christ, I want to do a little bit with a bibliography in case viewers and students want to go further. The standard for many, many years was Lewis Smead's good book, *All Things Made New*, in 1970.

He took a redemptive-historical approach and addressed a neglected doctrine. There was nothing at that time on union with Christ, and it remained a standard for many, many years because other things weren't written. It's still a solid book.

Lewis Smead's *All Things Made New*. William Evans wrote *Imputation and Impartation*, which deals with John Calvin's considerable doctrine of union with Christ and the fact that it was lost and then recovered by only some of his theological heirs. It's a good historical study.

It doesn't treat the Scriptures directly, but it is a valuable historical study by Bill Evans. *Imputation and Impartation*. Union with Christ, although there's no separate chapter in Calvin's Institutes, it pervades the whole.

In his own estimation, one of the supreme blessings of being saved is being a child of God and being adopted. And all the aspects, again, of the application of salvation are in Christ. Being joined by him, we receive all of those savings benefits.

Hans Berger, a Dutch pastor and scholar, wrote *Being in Christ*, a biblical and systematic investigation from a Reformed perspective. In this book, he dealt with two historical figures, John Owen, the Puritan who had a wonderful and warm doctrine of union with Christ, and Herman Bavinck, the famous Dutch scholar, systematic theologian. He dealt with two biblical authors, John and Paul, very appropriately, and then two moderns, Ingolf Dalferth and Oliver O'Donovan, the famous ethicist.

Robert Letham's book, *Union with Christ in Scripture, History, and Theology*, is really good. It's really good. It leaves us begging for more because it's really brief, but he treats union with Christ and creation.

Since Christ is the true image of God when God created Adam and Eve, they were made in his image, if you will, a creaturely image in their case, of course, but after the pattern of Christ, the true image of God. The Incarnation is huge because without the Incarnation, we could not be joined to Christ. The Incarnation is an essential prerequisite along with Jesus' sinless life for his saving death and triumphant resurrection. Letham also covers Pentecost.

This is the New Covenant outpouring of the Spirit, which indeed makes union with Christ a reality for all the people of God. Christ's resurrection, which unleashes God's eternal life and power, again, is essential in union with him because we're joined to the living Christ who is raised from the dead. Letham's book does cover the Bible and history, but it is especially good in the area of historical theology.

He also covers systematics. It deals with the Bible and systematics, but historical theology is its main focus. J. Todd Billings wrote *Union with Christ, Reframing Theology and Ministry for the Church*.

He treats Calvin and systematics, especially union with Christ and depravity and the incomprehensibility of God. As we'll see, especially in John's writings, that is a good subject to treat because it is astonishing for John to teach not only that the Trinitarian persons mutually indwell one another but that by God's grace, in a creaturely way, believers also mutually indwell the Trinity. That almost sounds blasphemous, but it's John's teaching, and, of course, John communicated very carefully, observing the creator-creature distinction and much more. Billings is right, though.

Union with Christ has to do with systematics, but Billings' whole book, *Union with Christ, Reframing Theology and Ministry for the Church*, is well titled because the whole book is geared toward ministry, and that is good because Union with Christ is a practical doctrine. Constantine Campbell, or as his friends call him, Con Campbell, wrote the most outstanding book on Paul called *Paul and Union with Christ, an*

Exegetical and Theological Study. It gives a brief history of the study of Union with Christ and works very well with Greek.

Campbell has written books on the Greek of the New Testament. He works well with the Greek expressions for Union. He does first-rate exegesis of Pauline texts and images or pictures, and also Pauline theology.

So, it is still the best book on Paul, and it is outstanding. In my own book, which I'll mention in a minute, I am dependent on him. My scope is the whole Bible, but my work in Paul is greatly influenced. I'm indebted to Campbell.

Marcus Johnson of Moody Bible Institute, or whatever the name is today, *One with Christ*, he wrote an evangelical theology of salvation, that emphasizes union with Christ and his benefits, but he rightly says we emphasize the benefits sometimes and miss the fact that it's union with the living Christ, and that makes all the difference, and that brings the benefits. So, Marcus Johnson's book is well-received.

A very scholarly, wide-ranging, and worthwhile study is that of Grant MacAskill, *Union with Christ in the New Testament*, 2013. I said it already: it's wide-ranging historically, biblically, and theologically, comparing different branches of the Christian Church, including Eastern Orthodoxy. I mean, no other book does this.

So, MacAskill's range is wide, his work is scholarly, and it is a worthwhile treatment. In 2015, I wrote *Salvation Applied by the Spirit, Union with Christ*, and as far as I know, it's the only attempt to summarize union, to treat it, looking at the whole Bible. As we'll see, it's a New Testament doctrine, and yet its foundations are laid by the Lord through the biblical writers in the Old Testament, the Synoptic Gospels, and then Acts, and those foundations are important.

More about that in the coming lecture. Before I get to the person of the Holy Spirit, I just want to say I have had the privilege of writing a number of books over the years, and none has been more wonderful and bewildering than the book on the book *Salvation Applied by the Spirit, Union with Christ*. Why is it wonderful? I was blessed and overwhelmed by the theme of Union with Christ because it is simultaneously wonderful and bewildering.

Why is it wonderful? Marcus Johnson, whose book I just mentioned, answers, "The primary, central, and fundamental reality of salvation is our union with Jesus Christ, because of which all the benefits of the Savior flow to us, and through which union all these benefits are to be understood. The most basic of all saving truths is the union God the Father forges between the believer and his Son, Jesus Christ, through the power of the Holy Spirit. To put it plainly, Johnson wrote, to be saved is to be united to the Savior."

It is a wonderful teaching, as we will see, Lord willing. It is also bewildering. If it's so wonderful, why is it also so bewildering? Westminster professor of New Testament and then theology, I suppose by now emeritus Richard Gaffin answers, and I quote, certainly in its full dimensions, this mystery of union is beyond the believer's comprehension.

Involved here, as much as in anything pertaining to salvation and the gospel, is the hallmark of all true theological understanding, that knowledge of Christ's love that surpasses knowledge, the knowledge of what is beyond all human knowing. Ephesians 3:18 and 19 compare 1 Corinthians 2:9. Again, he's referring to some of these teachings that by God's grace, through faith, believers share in the divine life. Oh, we don't become gods or part of God.

The creator-creature distinction is forever. At least it kicked in as soon as we were made, and it's forever henceforth. But we share in God's, not only his love but his life.

So, Jesus could pray in John 17, Father, I in you, you in me, and they in us. Speaking of those who would believe in him through his disciples' word. Anyway, it was wonderful, warm teaching, a great blessing, and staggeringly bewildering at the same time.

But in order to talk about union properly, we must talk about the person of the Holy Spirit. He is a person and not a force, and he is a divine person, a member of the eternal Trinity. The Holy Spirit is a person.

Scripture presents the Spirit as a person, not an impersonal force. Here are some proofs of that. He has personal traits or qualities.

He performs personal ministries. He does things only people can do. And he is affected as a person.

When God enters into covenant with his people, there is give and take. There is relationship, and God responds to his people. I do not deny God's deity and even immutability rightly understood as his character and plan and so forth and promises to be stable, but we have to examine the attributes of God as well as everything else covenantally.

God enters into a real relationship with his people, and that affects everything. The person of the Holy Spirit, the Spirit, has personal traits. The elements of personality are intelligence, volition, and emotion.

The ability to think, a will, the ability to will and impose one's will on the world, and the ability to feel, to have emotion. Scripture ascribes all three of these to the Spirit. The Spirit has intelligence, Matthew chapter 10.

I'm going to be doing a lot of turning to Scripture because that surely is the place upon which theology should be based. Jesus warns his disciples and followers when they deliver you over; Matthew 10:19, when they deliver you over, do not be anxious about how you are to speak or what you are to say. What you are to say will be given to you at that time.

For it is not you who speak, but the Spirit of your Father, a beautiful expression, speaking through you. It speaks of times of great persecution, and yet God's being with his people and enabling them to stand for Christ. Specifically, the Spirit has intelligence.

He enables God's people to speak in such times beyond their own ability. Of course, the Spirit's intelligence is underscored in the farewell discourses of Jesus in John 14 through 16. So in 14:26 we read, no doubt a passage we'll be back to a number of times in these lectures, 25 of John 14, John 14:25, these things I've spoken to you while I am still with you, but the helper, the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in my name, he will teach you all things and bring to your remembrance all that I have said to you.

The Spirit has intelligence, he teaches, he helps the disciples remember. Likewise, in John 16:13, the Spirit is Jesus' alter ego. Jesus goes back to the Father, the Father, and the Son send the Spirit, and the Spirit takes up ministries that Jesus had performed during his three-and-a-half-year public ministry.

John 16:12, I still have many things to say to you, but you cannot bear them now. When the Spirit of truth comes, he will guide you into all the truth, for he will not speak on his own authority, but whatever he hears, he will speak, and he will declare to you things that are to come. The Spirit guides believers, especially the apostles in this context.

I see these verses as sort of the pre-authentication of the New Testament. The Spirit, Jesus says, when Jesus goes, the Spirit will come in a new and powerful way. He'll guide the disciples into truth.

That is an evidence of intelligence. Intelligent beings guide into truth, not mere impersonal forces. And finally, in 1 Corinthians 2:11, I'm doing a lot of proof-texting because I really want to show the breadth of the Bible's teaching of the personality of the Spirit.

The teaching on the deity of the Spirit is not as spread out. Nevertheless, it's more than sufficient. 1 Corinthians 2, Paul talks about the apostolic preaching being divine revelation.

What the apostles speak when they speak for God, in verse 10, Paul says, God has revealed these things to us through the Spirit, for the Spirit searches everything, even the depths of God. Who knows a person's thoughts except the Spirit of that person in him? So also, no one comprehends the thoughts of God except the Spirit of God.

Surely, the Spirit is a person. As a matter of fact, this verse implies he's a divine person. Who but God knows the thoughts of God?

The doctrine of the Trinity tells us we don't separate the persons, but we distinguish them. And here, the Spirit not only empowers the apostolic preaching, but he reveals God through it because he alone knows God's own divine thoughts. The Spirit reveals those thoughts and words through the apostles in their ministries and proclamations.

The Spirit is a person. He has intelligence. Furthermore, he has volition.

He has will. We see this in 1 Corinthians 12:11. There are two essential mysteries to the Christian faith that are essential for salvation.

The doctrine of the Trinity is that God is three in one. The doctrine of the two natures of the person of Christ is how the Son is both God and man in one person at the same time. A third mystery is equally mysterious, equally revealed in Scripture, at least to this biased Calvinist, but not equally important.

You can be a Christian without being a Calvinist, but mysterious is the dynamic interplay between God's absolute sovereignty and genuine human responsibility. We see it in the spiritual gifts in 1 Corinthians 12 and 14. Twice, believers are told to seek spiritual gifts that pertain to human responsibility.

In 1 Corinthians 12:11, however, we have the sovereignty side, and specifically, as is appropriate, since the Spirit is the giver of the gifts, we have the Spirit empowering the gifts as well. After mentioning many different spiritual gifts, in verse 11, Paul says of 1 Corinthians 12, all these gifts are empowered by one and the same Spirit, right, who apportions to each one, believer, individually as he wills. The verb speaks of volition and of will.

The Spirit has a will. It's a sovereign will to dispense spiritual gifts as he wants to. So, God is sovereign in giving gifts, and yet believers are told to seek them.

And perhaps when you get to the lectures on the doctrine of the church, we can sort that out completely. But in the meantime, do not lament that you don't have a spiritual gift if the Lord has not gifted you in that way. There's a time to realize that God is sovereign.

I don't have it. However, the other, the human responsibility side, I think, is especially for those who are lazy and who are not busy with God. The Lord says, wait a minute.

Seek me. Seek to find out what your giftedness is, and get busy in my kingdom. Spirit's a person, not a mere force.

He has intelligence, as people do. He has volition, or will, as only persons do. And he also has emotion.

Ephesians 4:30. In Hebrews 1, the psalmist quoted, it says that, in the beginning, you, speaking of Christ, loved righteousness and hated wickedness. God is an emotional being.

Oh, we distinguish God's emotions from ours. And one writer playing on the Greek word for God, Theos, called them the emotions. I get it.

We need to make some distinctions. That is, we are to conceive of God's hating and loving and so forth, and divine jealousy and other emotions. He reveals them to us in human terms.

How else could he do it? The whole Bible is God's word in human language. It's not God-speaker angel talk. We couldn't understand it.

And yet, it speaks the truth. And God's emotions are not like ours. Ours are tainted by sin, but his are pure and holy.

And nevertheless, he has emotion. He loves, he hates, and so forth. And in Ephesians 4:30, a beautiful passage.

That would be Ephesians, not Galatians. We read, Do not grieve the Holy Spirit of God, by whom you were sealed for the day of redemption. This is a mistranslation in the ESV.

My former student, Dane Ortland, was the head of the Bible division there until he went to take a pastorate. I let him know about this. He said it's going to be changed.

The Father is the sealer. The Holy Spirit is the seal. And we're sealed in union with Christ, should be.

Do not grieve the Holy Spirit of God, with whom you were sealed for the day of redemption by God the Father. They told me that the more recent editions of the ESV would correct that. Anyway, this point stands regardless.

Do not grieve the Holy Spirit of God. In the context, believers grieve. They wound emotionally God the Holy Spirit, in this context, especially by sinful anger and sinful speech.

God is a divine and infinite being, and yet he relates to his people covenantally, and God feels. God has emotion. Do I see this as threatening his stability? I do not.

I do not. And yet he enters into real give-and-take relationships with his people. He answers prayer.

He withholds judgment he had warned about in the light of repentance and so forth. And I'm not suggesting we can perfectly understand an infinite personal God, but we can understand in part, and surely his word is our guide, and it communicates the fact that God has emotions. And the Spirit, because he's a person, has emotions as well.

The cultic teaching, the teaching of some liberal theologians, that the Spirit is a mere force of God is wrong. Oh, a little bit, I can understand. The names Father and Son are warmer than the name Spirit.

Nevertheless, the Bible sometimes even uses masculine pronouns for the neuter noun Spirit to refer to God. Does that prove his personality? As a matter of fact, it doesn't. But the roles that he plays and the ministries that he performs show the Spirit is a person.

It's also true the Spirit is associated with the power of God, but that doesn't deny the fact that he's a person. He's a powerful person. Not only is the Holy Spirit a person, but he's also a divine person, and we'll be there in a moment.

I still need to finish this. The Spirit performs personal ministries. He takes Jesus' place.

In John 14:16, Jesus says, I will send you another helper. It's the word *paracletos*, or in English transliteration, *paraclete*. It's very difficult.

We cannot translate it consistently. It has to be done in individual contexts. So, 1 John 2:2 he's our defense attorney.

John 16:8 to 11, he's a prosecuting attorney. And the translations say helper and so forth. They use different words to express this.

Here's the point. He's Jesus' alter ego. He's another helper, another paraclete, because he takes Jesus' place.

Surely, only a person could do that. He continues Jesus' teaching. John 15:26.

The Spirit continues the teaching that Jesus began. That is, in the plan of God, the Father and the Son would send the Spirit to continue the ministries of Jesus. John 15:26.

When the helper comes, there's another way to do it. Helper is a good way to translate it. When the helper comes, whom I will send to you from the Father, the Spirit of truth who proceeds from the Father, he will bear witness about me.

He continues to teach, this time, about Jesus, even as Jesus taught about himself. He glorifies Jesus. John 16:14.

The Spirit will glorify me, for he will take what is mine and declare it for you. These are ministries that only persons perform. Only a person takes Jesus' place.

Only a person continues his teaching and teaches about Jesus. Only a person glorifies Jesus. Only a person convicts sinners, excuse me, of their sin, and that's John 16:8. When he comes, that is the helper, and he will convict the world concerning sin and righteousness and judgment.

The Spirit prays, Paul says in Romans 8:26. He prays for us in words too deep to be uttered. Romans 8:16.

Romans 8:26, I'm sorry. Likewise, the Spirit helps us in our weakness, for we do not know what to pray for as we ought. But the Spirit himself intercedes for us with groanings too deep for words.

Forces don't pray, persons do. The Spirit prays for us. He assures us, John 8, 16.

The Spirit himself bears witness with our spirit that we are children of God. He gives life. He's the life-giving Spirit, 2 Corinthians 3, 6. In all these ministries, we see only a person who can do them.

The Spirit performs them. Therefore, the Spirit, the Holy Spirit, is a personal being. Furthermore, he's affected as a person.

He can be blasphemed, Mark 3:29. Lied to, Acts 5:3. You lie to the Holy Spirit, Paul tells Ananias and Sapphira. The Spirit can be tested, Acts 5:9, in a way that God should not be tested.

The Spirit is tested. The Spirit can be resisted, Stephen says to the Jewish audience before they stone him to death. You always resist the Holy Spirit as your fathers did to the prophets.

Stephen, Acts 7:51. The Spirit can be grieved, as we saw in Ephesians 4, 30. He can be quenched, 1 Thessalonians 5:19.

And the Spirit can be insulted, Hebrews 10:29. In one of the great, five great warning passages in Hebrews, those who are attempted, it looks like Jews to profess, Jewish Christians attempted to return to Judaism to be spared persecution, need to know that to do that is spiritual suicide. If one does that, there remains no longer a sacrifice for sins, Hebrews 10:26, but only God's judgment.

Sitting against the law of Moses is grievous, Hebrews 10:29. How much worse punishment do you think will be deserved by the one who has trampled underfoot the Son of God by rejecting his atonement and has profaned the blood of the covenant, that would be the in which Jesus is the exclusive mediator, by which he was sanctified, that is those who profess Christ are set apart, becoming a part of the church, and has outraged the spirit of grace. These are all sins one commits if one despises the gospel and the new covenant and denies the Christ that one formerly professed.

The spirit is insulted. Only a person could be blasphemed, lied to, tested, resisted, grieved, quenched, or insulted. I'll give those verses one more time.

Spirit can be blasphemed, Mark 3:29. Jesus said, truly, truly, I say to you, all sins will be forgiven, the children of man, and whatever blasphemies they utter, but whoever blasphemes against the Holy Spirit never has forgiveness, but is guilty of an eternal sin, Mark explains, for they were saying he has an unclean spirit. Mark 3, I read 28 through 30.

In Acts 5, Ananias and Sapphira agreed to lie. Their property was their own. There is no communism going on here.

It's a voluntary giving of possessions and lands to the apostles for the work of the ministry. So, their sin is not that they didn't want to keep their stuff, their land. Their sin is they lied.

A man named Ananias and his wife, Sapphira, sold a piece of property, Acts 5:2. And with his wife's knowledge, he kept back some for himself and brought only a part of

it and laid it at the apostles' feet. But Peter said, Acts 5:3, Ananias, why has Satan filled your heart to lie to the Holy Spirit? Spirit's a person who can be affected as a person. You can't lie to a force.

You lie to persons, and here they lie to the Holy Spirit. And to keep back for yourself part of the proceeds of the land. While it remained unsold, did it not remain your own? And after it was sold, was it not at your disposal? Why is it that you have contrived this deed in your heart? You have not lied to man but to God.

I'd point out, anticipating the next set of notes here, that not only does this passage show the Spirit is affected as a person, he can be lied to, but it interchanges his name with that of God. Lying to the Spirit is lying to God. When Ananias heard these words, he fell down and breathed his last.

Sadly, Sapphira suffers the same fate as God, as he occasionally does in his word, giving a few sinners what all of us deserve many times. He singles them out as examples of his holiness and justice in order to warn his people. Three hours later, Sapphira comes in, Acts 5:7, not knowing what had transpired.

Tell me whether you sold the land for so and so much, Peter says, for so much. She said yes, for so much. Then Peter said to her, how is it, Acts 5:9, that you have agreed together, you plural, to test the Spirit of the Lord? Behold, the feet of those who have buried your husband are at the door.

This is a figure of speech, a part for the whole. Their tootsies stand for their whole bodies. Synecdoche is part for the whole or the whole for a part.

In this case, their feet stand for the whole people, for the whole being, their whole beings, their whole bodies. Behold, the feet of those who buried your husband are at the door, and they will carry you out. Immediately, she fell down at his feet and breathed her last.

Here's the point, verse 11, and great fear came upon the whole church and upon all who heard of these things. God is promoting the holy fear of his name by doing a tiny sample of what his people deserve when they rebel against him. Our point is that Spirit can be lied to, and Spirit can be tested. Therefore, he is a person.

And again, at the end of Stephen's speech in Acts 7:51, he lowers the boom, you stiff-necked people, uncircumcised in heart and ears, uncircumcised ears, excuse me, you always resist the Holy Spirit. As your fathers did, so do you. Which of the prophets did your fathers not persecute? And they killed those who announced beforehand the coming of the righteous one, a reference to Jesus Christ, whom you have now betrayed and murdered.

Spirit can be resisted. The history of Israel shows that, and its epitome is the covenant people crucifying their Messiah, Acts 7:51. We already saw the spirit being grieved in Ephesians 4:30, in the very context of God sealing his people, the father giving the people of God the Holy Spirit as a seal, as a guarantee of their final salvation.

They're sealed, Ephesians 4:30 for the day of redemption. The notion of the seal in the New Testament is a Trinitarian notion. The Father is the sealer, not the Holy Spirit.

The ESV is wrong; it was wrong in that translation in Ephesians 4-30. I hope they did correct it as they said they would. The seal is the Holy Spirit.

He's the wax on the envelope, if you will. Sealing is done in him, Ephesians 1:13 and 14, and in him you are also sealed with the promised Holy Spirit, the Holy Spirit of promise. That is, the Father seals believers' union with Christ, and he seals them with the Holy Spirit himself.

It's a Trinitarian function. The spirit can be grieved, Ephesians 4:30. He can be quenched, 1 Thessalonians 5. We hit some warnings as we study the personality of the spirit, especially this notion of his being influenced or affected.

Pray without ceasing. Rejoice always. Pray without ceasing.

Give thanks in all circumstances, for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus for you. Do not quench the spirit. Do not despise prophecies, but test everything.

Hold fast to what is good. Abstain from every form of evil. Do not quench the spirit, like throwing big quantities of water or spraying a fire hose on the fire.

Believers can quench the spirit by their unbelief. The point is that the spirit is a person. He can be quenched.

And we saw already in Hebrews 10 that along with Christ and his cross, which can be insulted, so the spirit of grace can be insulted as God's professed people turn away from Christ, denying the profession they had once made. Furthermore, the spirit is not an impersonal force but a person we know. John 14:17 is significant because, in general, Jesus talks about the Father and the Son in his farewell discourses and pretty much consigns the spirit to post-Pentecost operations and ministries.

Oh, the Gospel of John does mention the spirit giving new life in the born-again passage in John 3 and mentions in a number of places the spirit active in Jesus' life in his earthly ministry. But the ministries of the spirit that we rejoice about in Paul, in John, are predicted to come after the great pouring out of the spirit at Pentecost, as

the very end of John 7 speaks of. So, John 14:17 tells us, if you love me, you'll keep my commandments, John 14:15, and I will ask the Father, and he'll give you another helper to be with you forever, even the spirit of truth, whom the world cannot receive because it neither sees him nor knows him.

You know him. You can't know a force, but you can know a person. You know him, for he dwells with you and will be in you.

Spirit is knowable as a person is. He dwells, it's the language of a person dwelling with something, living with somebody else. He'll dwell with believers and even indwell them, be in them, and that is only a ministry that persons engage in, indwelling.

Furthermore, the spirit is a person with whom we fellowship. We see it in the most famous Pauline benediction, which happens to be my own favorite, 2 Corinthians 13:13 or 13:14 in the ESV. Another translation puts it in verse 13.

I believe 14 is the most common way Bibles do it. The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God, and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit be with you all. Here is the Trinity.

Interesting order. Son, Father, Spirit. Paul prays that believers might know Christ's grace, God the Father's love, and the Holy Spirit's fellowship.

Each of these nouns speaks of relationship, fellowship, and love. You can't have fellowship with a force. The fellowship of the Holy Spirit be with you all.

1 John 1, our fellowship is with the Father and with his Son Jesus Christ, and Paul would add, and with the Holy Spirit. The Spirit is a person with whom we fellowship.

So, in our next lecture, we will see the Holy Spirit as God, but to review, the Holy Spirit is not an impersonal force.

Oh, he's a powerful person, and we grant his name is not as warm and familial as Father and Son. Nevertheless, the Bible presents him as a person. He has personal traits, intelligence, will, and emotions.

He performs ministries that only persons perform, taking Jesus' place, extending Jesus' teaching, glorifying Jesus, convicting people of their sins, praying for us, assuring us within, and giving us eternal life. He has personal traits, performs ministries only persons perform, and is affected as a person, as we just saw. He's blasphemed, lied to, tested, resisted, grieved, quenched, and insulted.

In a nutshell, as Jesus said in John 14:17, you know the Spirit. He's a person, for he is with you and will be in you. And thank God by his grace, we enjoy not only the grace of the Lord Jesus Christ and the love of God the Father, but we, his people, enjoy the fellowship of the Holy Spirit.

That is certainly the fellowship of a person, and even more, it's the fellowship of a divine person, the third person of the Trinity, which will be the subject of our next lecture.

This is Dr. Robert Peterson in his teaching on the Holy Spirit and Union with Christ. This is session 1, The Holy Spirit is a Person.