

# **Dr. Robert A. Peterson, The Holy Spirit and Union with Christ, Session 10, Foundations for Union with Christ, John's Gospel 14 and 15**

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This is Dr. Robert Peterson in his teaching on the Holy Spirit and Union with Christ. This is session 10, Foundations for Union with Christ, John's Gospel, John 14 and 15.

We continue our study of union with Christ in the fourth gospel with the mutual indwelling in John 14, more specifically, the mutual indwelling of the Father and the Son and the mutual indwelling of the Father and Son and believers.

In John 14:8 to 11, and then in verses 20 and 23. The verses are so beautiful, and I'll start from 14. One, let your hearts, let not your hearts be troubled.

Believe in God, and believe in me. In my Father's house there are many rooms. If it were not so, would I have told you that I go to prepare a place for you? And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again and will take you to myself, that where I am, you may be also.

And you know the way to where I am going. Thomas said to him, Lord, we do not know where you are going. How can we know the way? Jesus said to him, I am the way and the truth and the life.

No one comes to the Father except through me. If you had known me, you would have known my Father also. From now on, you will know him and have seen him.

Philip said to him, Lord, show us the Father, and it is enough for us. Jesus said to him, have I been with you so long, and you still do not know me, Philip? Whoever has seen me has seen the Father. How can you say, show us the Father? Do you not believe that I am in the Father and the Father is in me? The words that I say to you are that I do not speak on my own authority, but the Father who dwells in me does his works.

Believe me that I am in the Father, and the Father is in me, or else believe on account of the works themselves. Jesus comforts the disciples by encouraging their faith in him. He tells them of his departure to prepare places for them in the Father's heavenly house.

In other words, he wants them to know they belong to the Father. The Father will welcome them into his presence, and Jesus promises to return for them. All of that is verses one through three.

He also tells them that they know the way to the Father's house. They know the road, the way, to the Father's house in heaven, verse four. Thomas protests, verse five, and then Jesus says in the famous 14:6, I'm the way and the truth and the life.

This is one of John's seven I am sayings. They are sayings where Jesus says, I am, and uses the word the, the article the, and then a predicate nominative. There are seven different I am sayings, but not seven different meanings.

There are three different meanings, and Jesus summarizes the three meanings here in this one verse in case we miss the meanings in the other places. I'm the way, and I'm the road to the Father's heavenly house. It means he's the only Savior of the world.

The former, one other former I am saying, gives the same sense, but not in a heavenly picture, but an earthly one, where Jesus says in John 10, he's the gate into the sheepfold. That means he's the only Savior. He's the only way into the people of God, the only Savior.

I'm the way, I'm the truth. Jesus is the revealer of God, one of the two major themes of John's gospel, along with the fact he's the life-giver, and that's what I am the life means, but I am the truth. I'm the revealer of God.

We see it in John 9, where Jesus does, shows it by healing a blind man, and then Jesus claims it by saying, I am the light of the world. Jesus is the way, the only Savior. He is the truth, the revealer of God.

He is the life. This is the meaning of most of the "I am" sayings. That is, he is the bestower of eternal life.

We see it in the good shepherd imagery. I'm the good shepherd. I give my sheep eternal life.

They'll never perish. And, of course, we see it in the earlier healings. He gives life to bodies, and so forth, and more importantly, he gives eternal life to his people, and you see it most emphatically in chapter 11, where he says, I'm the resurrection and the life, and he proves it by raising his friend Lazarus from the grave.

John 14:6 is one of the seven I am sayings that summarizes the meanings of all seven. Philip asks for a theophany. Jesus is the only road to the Father's heavenly home, the only Savior.

If they knew him, they would know the Father. In fact, from now on, you will know him and have seen him--verse seven.

At this, Philip asked for a theophany—verse eight. Discouraged, Jesus replies in verses nine through 11.

Have I been with you for so long, and you still do not know me, Philip? Whoever has seen me has seen the Father. How can you say, show us the Father? Do you not believe that I'm in the Father and the Father is in me? The words I say to you are that I do not speak on my own authority, but the Father who dwells in me does his works. Believe me that I am in the Father, and the Father is in me, or else believe on account of the works themselves.

Jesus is chagrined that after all this time, Philip, who speaks for the disciples, we shouldn't be too tough on Philip, does not understand that to see the Son is to see the Father. This is because the Son is the revealer of God. But there's a deeper reason.

Verse 10. I'm in the Father, and the Father is in me. Once more, Jesus speaks of the mutual indwelling of the Father and the Son.

The disciples do not need a theophany of the invisible God, a visible appearance of God who is a spirit and who is invisible. It seems to me theophanies, which the very word speaks of visibility, could involve other senses as well, hearing God, for example, but that's what it's called, and sight is certainly emphasized in those appearances of God in the scriptures. Although sound and speech are also present.

Anyway, they don't need a theophany. They see the incarnate Son. They've had the incarnation.

They don't need a visible appearance that goes away. They have the permanent incarnation of the eternal Son in Jesus. Since He and the Father mutually co-inhere, to see the Son is to see the Father.

It is only the Son's incarnation that enables Him to be seen. The Father, that is. Excuse me.

It is only the Son's incarnation that enables the Son to be seen, and by seeing the Son, they see the invisible God made visible. Paul uses different idioms, but he says something similar. Christ is the image of the invisible God.

Colossians 1:15 and Hebrews 1:3, Christ is the... Boy, I should know these things backwards and forwards by heart. Hebrews 1:3, the radiance of the glory of God and the exact imprint of His nature. The writer to the Hebrews, I agree with the origin; only God knows for sure who that is, uses these two pictures to communicate three truths.

In the context of Hebrews 1, the main truth is the Son is the ultimate mediator of God. He surpasses Old Testament mediators, that is, prophets and angels who were involved in the giving of the law because He Himself is God. One image is from looking up at the sky at the sun and the S-O-N, the sun, is the radiance, the effulgence, the outshining of the glory of God who's pictured as a S-U-N, and then an image from the world of the minting of coins.

The sun is the exact imprint, He's the coin, if you will, of the nature of God, which is the dye. The main thought in context: the ray reveals the sun, which is invisible because you can't stare at it; you'll burn your retinas. ancient people understood that probably a few of them the hard way, and the rest listened. The sun is the coin that bears the imprint of the dye, which contained the malleable metal and banged with a hammer, so a denarius dye produced a denarius.

In context, the sun is the mediator, the revealer of God, surpassing Old Testament mediators of revelation, prophets, and angels; Hebrews 1:1 through actually 2:4 is the application of Hebrews 1. But along with the main idea of the sun manifesting the Father, being the mediator of revelation, are two other ideas. Number one is equality between the sun and the Father. The ray is the S-U-N, prolonged through space, and the denarius coin is what is put into the dye, made visible.

So, the main idea of revelation, the secondary idea, the deity of Christ, and the similarity of the Father and Son. The third idea is subordination. The ray is the sun sent into space, it's not the invisible sun looking at it directly.

In a similar way, the denarius is not the dye; it comes from the dye. So, there's an overlap between the teachings of John and Paul. When Paul says Christ is the image of the invisible God, he means in the incarnation, Jesus is the visible revelation of God, the Father, who is an invisible spirit.

And again, Hebrews 1:3, with different images, communicates the same truth. It is only the sun's incarnation that enables him to be seen, and seeing the sun, they see the invisible God made visible. Therefore, Jesus can say in John 14:10, the Father indwelling him performs the Father's works.

The disciples will enjoy mutual indwelling with the Son. Jesus promises to ask the Father to send the spirit of truth to his followers. He will dwell with them and be in them.

Verses 16 and 17. I'll 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 for he dwells with you and will be in you.

Verse 18, I will not leave you as orphans, I will come to you. They will see the resurrected Son, and because of his resurrection, they too will experience resurrection life. Because I live, verse 19, you also will live.

They will see the risen Christ, and because of his resurrection, they too will experience resurrection life. Now in regeneration, and at the end of the age, in resurrection from the grave to eternal life on the new earth. Jesus then says, in that day you will know that I am in my Father, and you are in me, and I am in you, verse 20.

In that day, you will know that I am in the Father, and you in me, and I in you. Here for the first time, believers are caught up in the divine co-inheritance. Co-inheritance.

After Jesus is raised, his followers will understand that he indwells the Father, that is, that Jesus is divine. They will also come to understand a wonderful corollary. They are in Christ, and he is in them.

The language of perichoresis co-indwelling used exclusively of the persons of the Godhead up until now, John 6 and John 10, is extended to include the disciples who will enjoy a form of mutual indwelling with the Son. I say a form of mutual indwelling because, on one level, the Trinitarian person sharing of the divine life is theirs alone. On another level, however, believers enter into fellowship with the Son and with the Father and the Spirit, and they do so now by faith in the risen Lord Jesus.

The disciples will be in the Son that is united to him spiritually in union with the living Christ, and he will join the Spirit of truth in dwelling them. Verses 17 and 20. The Father and Son will make their home with Christians.

This is an overlooked, wonderful, warm, and wonderful passage in John. Judas, and how glad this Judas is when words like this follow. Judas, not Iscariot, said to him, Lord, how is it that you will manifest yourself to us and not to the world? We don't understand all this sovereignty business.

Jesus answered him, if anyone loves me, he will keep my word, and my Father will love him, and we will come to him and make our home with him. Whoever does not love me does not keep my words, and the word you hear is not mine, but the Father's who sent me. Then he goes on to talk about the Holy Spirit, of course.

Andreas Kostenberger, who's written a helpful commentary on the Gospel of John, wrote, this is the only place in the New Testament where the Father and the Son are both said to indwell believers. When Jesus departs, he will not leave his disciples as orphans. He will send them the Spirit, whom they will know, who will indwell them and be in them, verses 16 through 18.

In addition, he will not leave them homeless. Don't miss the imagery. Verses one to three, he's going to the Father's heavenly home to prepare a place for them, a room in the heavenly mansion if you will, but the home imagery is returned.

He returns to it here. They're not going to be homeless. Instead, the Father and the Son will come to make their home with believers.

Jesus then uses this homey figure, if I can call it that, to reinforce his teaching on union. When Jesus ascends to the Father, the two of them will indwell God's people so that believers will experience, quote, the immediate presence of the deity. Leon Morris, in his Gospel of John, said that.

It will be Paul's part to emphasize the spirits indwelling God's people, both corporately and individually. John 15, our fourth passage in John, deals with union with Christ. Jesus, the vine, believers, the branches.

John 15, one through 17. We do want to get the whole sweep in mind. I'm the true vine, and my Father is the vinedresser.

Every branch in me that does not bear fruit, he takes away, and every branch that does bear fruit, he prunes that it may bear more fruit. Already you are clean because of the words that I've spoken to you. Abide in me, and I in you.

As the branch cannot bear fruit by itself unless it abides in the vine, neither can you unless you abide in me. I'm the vine, and you are the branches. Whoever abides in me and I in him, he it is that bears much fruit, for apart from me, you can do nothing.

If anyone does not abide in me, he is thrown away like a branch and withers, and the branches are gathered, thrown into the fire, and burned. If you abide in me and my words abide in you, ask whatever you wish, and it will be done for you. By this, my Father is glorified that you bear much fruit and so prove to be my disciples.

As the Father has loved me, so have I loved you. Abide in my love. If you keep my commandments, you will abide in my love, just as I have kept my Father's commandments and abide in his love.

These things I've spoken to you, my joy may be in you, and your joy may be full. This is my commandment that you love one another as I have loved you. Greater love has no one than this, that someone lay down his life for his friends.

You are my friends if you do what I command you. No longer do I call you servants, for the servant does not know what his master is doing, but I have called you friends, for all that I have heard from my Father I've made known to you. You did not choose me, but I chose you and appointed you, that you should go and bear fruit, and that

your fruit should abide so that whatever you ask the Father in my name, he will give it to you.

These things I command you that you love one another. If the world hates you, know that it has hated me first because it hated me before it hated you. If you are of the world, the world will love you as its own, but because you are not of the world, but I chose you out of the world, therefore the world hates you.

I extended it down through verse 19, of course. Abiding appears 11 times in these verses. That is incredible.

And many of these uses pertain to the mutual abiding of believers in Christ. Jesus, the true vine. The Old Testament picture of Israel as the vineyard of the Lord, compared to Isaiah 5:1 to 7, is the background, along with many other passages.

Sometimes, Israel is called the vine. Jesus presents himself as the fulfillment of Israel. Jesus is the true vine, the completion of Old Testament Israel.

Whereas Israel failed, he succeeded. The Father is the vine dresser. He's the director of the Son's mission, and this language implies harmony between the Father and the Son.

Jesus portrays two kinds of branches in him. This is not technically union with Christ yet. It's part of the vinicultural imagery.

The first bears no fruit, so the Father removes it from the vine. The second kind of branch bears fruit, so the Father prunes it so it will be more fruitful, for two good reasons. Actually, more than two, but just two for right now will suffice.

For two good reasons, this does not speak of the loss of salvation. First, throughout Scripture, although God's people exhibit degrees of fruitfulness, Matthew 13:23, 30-fold, 60-fold, and 100-fold, fruitlessness means an absence of divine life. Matthew 7:16 and 19, no fruit shows no life.

Again, I'll say it, in the parable of the soils, there are different degrees of fruitfulness for God's people. Some are more fruitful than others by God's grace and work. Nevertheless, Matthew 7:17, every healthy tree bears good fruit, but the diseased tree bears bad fruit.

A healthy tree cannot bear bad fruit, nor can a diseased tree bear good fruit. Every tree that does not bear good fruit is cut down and thrown into the fire. It's a picture of judgment.

Thus, you'll recognize them by their fruits. There are degrees of fruitfulness for Christians, but no fruit, I say it pastorally, is a very bad sign. From God's perspective, no fruit, which is the one Jesus shows here, means no salvation, no life.

Life shows up in fruitfulness. Second, in verse 8, fruit-bearing is proof of discipleship. By this, my father is glorified that you bear much fruit and so prove to be my disciples.

If they bear no fruit, they prove they're not his disciples, is the point. Fruit bearing is proof of discipleship, and no fruit betrays one who was never connected to the vine in a life-giving way. Yes, in the imagery, they're connected to the vine because of the nature of the imagery.

The unfruitful branch immediately in view is Judas Iscariot. Inspired by Satan, he departed to betray Jesus, John 13:27-30. Jesus fooled his fellow disciples, John 13, 29.

They did not even suspect him when he went out to betray Jesus, but he did not fool Jesus, John 6:64, 70-71. Did I not choose you, the 12, and one of you is the devil? He knew from the beginning who would not believe in him. The fruitless branch's being in the vine, 15:2, shows close contact with Jesus, though this pertains to future apostates, especially to Judas, entrusted with the money bag but untrustworthy.

There's no way the fellow disciples knew Judas was unreliable ultimately untrustworthy, and ultimately the betrayer. Matthew was a former tax collector. Matthew would have gone insane or killed Judas to let him have the money bag, knowing he was a thief.

No. According to 12:6, he used to help himself to the money given to Jesus and his disciples. What a crook.

It's an imperfect tense showing his customary action, his ongoing action. In 13:2, the devil instigates the betrayal. It's not an accident that Satan had an entree into Judas's life and not into the other disciples.

In 21, he comes into him to betray Jesus. In chapter 13:13-21, in 26-30, he goes to do the foul deed. I think I misspoke.

In 13:21, Jesus says, one of you will betray me. He announced the betrayal. Betrayer is in the presence.

26-30 is where Satan enters into him, and Judas departs to betray the Lord. Mutual abiding of Jesus and the disciples. Jesus' purifying word has cleansed the eleven.



Now he tells them, verse 4, abide in me and I in you. As a branch cannot bear fruit by itself unless it abides in the vine, neither can you unless you abide in me. As a branch severed from a vine is fruitless, so apart from me, Jesus said, you can do nothing, verse 5. False branches are cut off and cast into hellfire, verse 6. What does abiding in Jesus mean? Here are the places where it occurs.

Verse 4, abide in me and I in you. As a branch cannot bear fruit by itself unless it abides in the vine, neither can you unless you abide in me, verse 4. Whoever abides in me and I in him, he it is that bears much fruit, verse 5. If anyone does not abide in me, verse 6, if you abide in me and my words abide in you, ask whatever you wish, it will be done for you. As the Father has loved me, so I have loved him.

Abide in my love, verse 9. If you keep my commandments, you will abide in my love, just as I've kept my Father's commandments and abide in his love. You did not choose me, but I chose you and appointed you that you should go and bear fruit and that your fruit should abide. In verse 9, it seems the key is the key to me.

In verse 9 of John 15, Jesus implies what it means to abide in him. To abide in him is to abide in his love, to continue in fellowship with him, to love and, of course, obey him, even as he does the Father. Beasley Murray wrote a commentary on John, and he wrote, George Beasley Murray, quote, to remain in Jesus is also to remain in his love, just as throughout this life, Jesus remained in the Father's love, close quote.

Jesus does not mention the mutual indwelling of the Father and the Son in this passage. Apparently, it was not John's purpose to give a complete systematic theology in every chapter of his gospel. I'm being facetious.

It's not the Bible's purpose. It tells a story. Nevertheless, 2 Timothy 3, 16, 17 tells us all scripture is given by God and is profitable for, the first thing mentioned is teaching.

It is proper to theology from the scriptures, but we need to do it most carefully. Rather, Jesus focuses on his and believers' mutual abiding in love. Abide in me and I in you, verse 4. Mutual abiding overlaps the idea of mutual indwelling.

To abide in Christ is to be in him, but it is more. There's an overlap, but it's an overlap. Abiding is a bigger circle, of which being in Christ is a subset. So abiding means being in, but being in doesn't necessarily mean abiding.

But abiding is more than merely being in. It means to love him. Likewise, for him to abide in us is for him to continue to love us.

Abiding then is a covenantal concept that speaks of the son's continuing to love his people and their continuing to love him. As with many pictures of union with Christ,

this one is both corporate and individual. Verse 5, I'm the vine, you are the branches, corporate.

Whoever abides in me and I in him, he it is that bears much fruit, and so forth, singular. Both are true. What is the fruit? Results of this mutual abiding are presented in terms of fruit in keeping with the imagery of the vine and the branches and the grapes.

Obedience to Jesus' commands, verse 10, is one of the fruits. Love for other believers is another, verses 12 to 14. Also, the great joy that comes from continuing in a warm personal relationship with Jesus, verse 11.

Though the repeated emphasis of John 15 is on the disciples' response and obedience as covenant keepers, divine sovereignty is not omitted. The emphasis is on human responsibility, no question. But verses 16 and 19 include a note of sovereignty.

Their covenant, Lord Jesus, chose and ordained them to bear fruit and for their fruit to abide. He added another result of bearing fruit, which was answered prayer. I might say what leads me to see John 15:16 as an example of not just choosing disciples for service but for actual salvation is verse 19.

If you belong to the world, the world would love you as its own, but you are not of the world, but I chose you out of the world. Therefore, the world hates you. As Don Carson shows in his book *Divine Sovereignty and Human Responsibility*, the biblical perspective's intention in the gospel of John is a unique statement in scripture that Jesus is the author of election.

Mutual indwelling of the Father and the Son and the Son and believers in John 17:20 through 26. This is our next topic, and it will be good for us to discuss this in our next lecture. Thank you.

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