

Dr. Robert A. Peterson, The Holy Spirit and Union with Christ, Session 15, Foundations for Union with Christ in Paul, Ephesians, Philippians, and Colossians

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This is Dr. Robert Peterson in his teaching on the Holy Spirit and union with Christ. This is session 15, Foundations for Union with Christ in Paul, Ephesians, Philippians, and Colossians.

We continue our examination of union with Christ in Paul's letters by turning to Ephesians 2, verses 11 through 16.

Paul writes, therefore remember that at one time you Gentiles in the flesh, called the uncircumcision by what is called the circumcision which is made in the flesh by hands, remember that you were at that time separated from Christ, alienated from the commonwealth of Israel, and strangers to the covenants of promise, having no hope and without God in the world. But now in Christ Jesus, you who once were far off have been brought near by the blood of Christ. For he himself is our peace, who has made us both one and has broken down in his flesh the dividing wall of hostility by abolishing the law of commandments expressed in ordinances that he might create in himself one new man in place of the two, so making peace, and might reconcile us both to God in one body through the cross, thereby killing the hostility.

Paul gives his most expansive description of a lost person's need for union with Christ in this text. That need is underscored in the case of Gentile unbelievers. Paul writes you were at that time separated from Christ, verse 12.

The need for union with Christ is separation from him. He possesses eternal life and forgiveness. As long as we are separated from him, we are also separated from all his saving benefits.

The situation is accentuated in the case of Gentiles because they are also quote alienated from the commonwealth of Israel and strangers to the covenants of promise, verse 12. Consequently, Gentile unbelievers, as representatives of all believers, have no hope and are without God in the world, verse 12. But thanks be to God's marvelous grace that when Paul's readers were in such dire straits, verse 13, but now in Christ Jesus, you who once were far off have been brought near by the blood of Christ.

It is not difficult to discern the nuance of in Christ Jesus here. It is locative and used metaphorically to indicate the realm of Christ, which stands in stark contrast to the realm of separation from him described so vividly in verse 12. The Father has transferred us to the domain of his son, wherein we have been brought near to God.

As a result, Jew and Gentile quote both have access in one spirit to the other to the Father, verse 18. Christ is the reconciler, the peacemaker, who unites believing Jews and Gentiles into one people of God. He makes peace through his death on the cross, thereby abolishing the Jewish law, in a sense, which divided Jews from Gentiles, verses 14 and 15.

His goal was, quote, to create in himself one new man in place of the two, so making peace, verse 15. Christ the reconciler is also the second Adam, who, by his death and resurrection, inaugurates the new creation. He thereby joins individual believers to himself in salvation and also joins them to all other believers.

Christ creates in himself, as Paul's language, one new man in place of the two, Jew and Gentile. Campbell correctly maintains that Paul employs the words in himself, in verse 15, to express incorporation into Christ. Indeed, it is he who has brought them together, I'm quoting, Jew and Gentile, by joining them both to him.

Campbell, again, the subsequent words corroborate this interpretation because Paul teaches that Christ reconciles, quote, both to God in one body through the cross, verse 16. God makes peace between Jews and Gentiles by combining them into one body of Christ, thereby creating what he calls the new humanity, which is another way of viewing the people of God, the church. Ephesians 2, 18 through 22, for through him we both, Jew and Gentile believers, have access in one spirit to the Father.

So, then you're no longer strangers and aliens, but you are fellow citizens with the saints and members of the household of God, built on the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Christ Jesus himself being the cornerstone, in whom the whole structure being joined together grows into a holy temple in the Lord. In Him, you also are being built together into a dwelling place for God by the Spirit. Amazingly, God has granted salvation to Gentiles.

They, along with believing Jews, constitute the church. Jew and Gentile, quote, both have access in one spirit to the Father, verse 18. Gentiles are no longer excluded from God's people.

They are citizens and members of God's household, verse 19. Here, for the fourth time, Paul identifies the church as a spiritual temple. See 1 Corinthians 3:16 and 17:1 Corinthians 6:16 to 20, 1 Corinthians 6:19 to 20, excuse me, 2 Corinthians 6:16.

One more time, 1 Corinthians 3:16, 17, 1 Corinthians 6:19 and 20, 2 Corinthians 6:16. Here is the fourth mention of that in Paul's letters. In terms of redemptive history, Christ is the cornerstone, implying the idea of incorporation into him, as in 1 Corinthians 3:11 and 16 and 17.

The New Testament apostles and prophets are the foundation, and the whole is a quote, holy temple in the Lord, Ephesians 2:21. This passage is no exception to the rule that God's presence makes a building a temple, a dwelling place, quote, for God by the Spirit, verse 22. This time, Paul explicitly makes the idea of incorporation into Christ clear.

He does so in three ways. Of course, as we studied the foundations for union with Christ in the Old Testament synoptic gospels and acts, we saw one of the three major themes, along with identification, and the third one was incorporation. Participation is the third one.

Thank you. That's right—identification, incorporation, participation.

God identifies his people with himself by virtue of his presence. He incorporates them into the people of God as a community, and they participate with God as he brings them into his story in the Old Testament. These themes are pursued in the New Testament by virtue of union with Christ in Paul, and here, we explicitly find the idea of incorporation, which has its roots in Old Testament synoptics and acts.

Paul speaks of incorporation in three ways. He says it is Christ, quote, in whom the building grows into a temple. In him, it is being built into God's dwelling place, number two and third, and this holy temple is in the Lord.

One more time. Christ is the one in whom the building grows into a temple. In him, it's being built into God's dwelling place, and this holy temple is in the Lord.

Tillman correctly states the phrase in the Lord refers not to God the Father but to the Lord Jesus Christ. It is noteworthy that all three uses of in Christ language here, in whom, in the Lord, and in him, in keeping with the building metaphor, speak of incorporation into Christ. Furthermore, worship of the holy trinity takes place in this temple.

For believing Jews and Gentiles, through him, Christ, the building and the temple both have access in one spirit, the Holy Spirit, to the Father, God the Father, verse 18. And God makes this holy temple in the Lord a dwelling place for God the Father by the Spirit, verses 21 and 22. Campbell adds two important points.

First, the temple metaphor is dynamic since God's people are being built together for his dwelling. And, mixing metaphors, the metaphor is organic in that God's people

grow into a holy temple in the Lord, 2:21. To communicate his theological vision, Paul mixes metaphors.

He depicts a building as growing into a temple before our eyes. And this dynamic action is ongoing. Believers are being built together progressively by the Spirit.

Paul adds the idea of indwelling. The Holy Spirit is working to build believers, both Jewish and Gentile, "into a dwelling place for God by the Spirit," verse 22. Though Paul usually ascribes indwelling to the Spirit and five times to Christ, this is one of only two times he ascribes it to God the Father.

God builds the temple into a dwelling place for God by the Spirit. Plainly, God the Father distinguished from Christ and the Spirit. The other place, by the way, where Scripture explicitly says the Father indwells us is 2 Corinthians 6:16. The Trinity indwells the people of God individually and communally.

I'll say what I said before. If Scripture never said, if Scripture only said the Spirit indwells the people of God, I would say that first of all and then say Scripture never says it, but because God is a triunity and the Trinitarian persons are distinguishable but inseparable, although Scripture never says it, that we have to say the whole Trinity indwells us, especially the Holy Spirit. But Scripture does say it.

Five or six times, Christ is spoken of as indwelling us, and two times of which this is one. The Father indwells the people of God. We can distinguish between God's general omnipresence and his special presence, and of course, the special presence of the Father now is in heaven where God dwells.

The special presence of the incarnate Son is at God's right hand, and the special presence of the Spirit, who is indeed the prime mover in indwelling, is in the people of God individually and is emphasized here corporately. Ephesians 6:10-12 is a wonderful spiritual warfare passage. Ephesians 6:10-12. Finally, the Father indwells us.

Paul writes, Be strong in the Lord and in the strength of his might. Put on the whole armor of God so that you may be able to stand against the schemes of the devil. For we do not wrestle against flesh and blood, but against the rulers, against the authorities, against the cosmic powers over this present darkness, against the spiritual forces of evil and evil in the heavenly places.

In this spiritual warfare text, Paul enjoins readers to, quote, put on the whole armor of God in light of the fact that their battle is against, quote, cosmic powers over this present darkness. Verses 11 and 12. Campbell notes, and I learned from this, this instructed me; Campbell notes that this recalls not only Roman military weaponry, as

it's commonly known, but also descriptions of Yahweh and his Messiah in battle as found in Isaiah.

And his conclusion merits quotation. Quoting Constantine Campbell, *Paul and Union with Christ*, quote, Thus, one of the implications of Ephesians 6:10-17 is that believers are to put on the armor of the Lord himself, the armor that the Lord himself wears in battle, which evokes a sense of union with him in the matter of spiritual warfare. Given that this union pervades the whole pericope, it is reasonable to conclude that Anchorio in the Lord, in 6:10, conveys union with the Lord.

Thus, when the apostle commands readers to be strong in the Lord and in the strength of his might, in verse 10, he means they are to be strong due to their union with Christ and his great strength. One last passage in Ephesians, Ephesians 6:21-22. You might think it's a strange choice, but I'll show you why I chose it in a moment. So that you also may know how I am and what I am doing, Tychicus, the beloved brother and faithful minister in the Lord, will tell you everything.

I have sent him to you for this very purpose, that you may know how we are and that he may encourage your hearts. Union with Christ so pervades the whole pericope, and it's Paul's thinking that half the time, he includes references to union in the initial and final greetings of his epistles as he does here. He tells the Ephesian church he's sending Tychicus to them to inform them about Paul's circumstances and to encourage them.

He describes Tychicus as a, quote, beloved brother and faithful minister in the Lord, verse 21. In the Lord functions here as frequently in Paul as a paraphrasis for believers. The sense then is that Tychicus is a faithful Christian minister, but instead of saying Christian, he says minister in the Lord.

It has the same meaning. Union with Christ has become so commonplace to designate God's people. I'll say it again: the most comprehensive way the New Testament designates the application of salvation, God actually bringing his grace that was planned in eternity past and the work was accomplished in the first century by Jesus, to actually bring that grace to bear on human lives, to save them, to move them from darkness to light, from death to life, is union with Christ.

Because by being spiritually joined to him, we get all of his saving benefits. We are regenerated in him. We are adopted in him, converted in him, justified in him.

We persevere in him. All of God's spiritual blessings are given to us, as Ephesians 1 says, in Christ Jesus. Every spiritual blessing in the heavenly places is given to the church in Christ Jesus.

Philippians 3, there are many passages in Philippians, but once again, I'm just cherry-picking a few to demonstrate the breadth and somewhat the depth of Paul's doctrine of union with Christ. Philippians 3:12, 13, 14. To do it right, I need to start with verse 4. The enemies, Paul has strong words for them, the mutilators of the flesh he calls them, the evildoers, the dogs, wow, Paul's pretty hot.

They put confidence in the flesh, in human pedigree and performance. Not I, Paul says, I no longer do that. Though I myself, Philippians 3:4, might have a reason for confidence in the flesh if anybody does.

I was circumcised on the eighth day in keeping the Abrahamic covenant. His parents were faithful Jews of the people of Israel, the only covenant nation in the whole world. The only covenant ethnicity of the tribe of Benjamin, one of the two faithful southern tribes that didn't apostatize in the break of the kingdoms after Solomon's death.

A Hebrew of Hebrews. Jews commonly spoke Aramaic after the return from the Babylonian captivity, but some families were distinctive, and Paul's family was one of them. His mother kept a kosher kitchen, and they spoke Hebrew in their home.

A Hebrew son of Hebrew parents. As to the law, a Pharisee. We have a negative view of the Pharisees, and rightly so, because Jesus excoriates them for being hypocrites and so forth, and they reject him in large measure.

But the common Jew had great respect for the Pharisees. They were dedicated laypersons who prayed, gave, and fasted more than the law required. And people looked up to them as very spiritually committed Jews.

As to zeal, Paul says, I was a persecutor of the church. As to righteousness under the law, blameless. I was a persecutor of the church.

That does not mean that Paul was really blameless, but in his own sight as a Pharisee, as a Hebrew of Hebrews, he zealously kept the law and was not conscious of breaking it until Romans 7. God caused it to come alive to him, and it slew him of his own coveting. But whatever gain I had, Philippians 3:7, I counted as loss for the sake of Christ. He goes further.

Indeed, I count everything as a loss because of the surpassing worth of knowing Christ Jesus, my Lord. For his sake, I've suffered the loss of all things and count them as rubbish. Skubalah, to translate it, rubbish, is a euphemism.

It means dung. Our concern is that I may gain Christ and be found in him. Those words.

Not having a righteousness of my own that comes from the law, but that which comes through faith in Christ. The righteousness from God, that depends on faith that I may know him and the power of his resurrection and may share in his sufferings, becoming like him in his death.

That by any means possible, I may attain the resurrection from the dead. Paul is accepted by God in Christ. But he also strives to live a Christian life.

He does not strive for God's acceptance. He already has that by grace through faith. I should have kept reading.

Not that I've already obtained this or am already perfect. I'm on Philippians 3:12 now. But I press on to make it my own because Christ Jesus has made me his own.

Brothers, I do not consider that I have made it my own. But one thing I do, forgetting what lies behind and straining forward to what lies ahead, is press on toward the goal of the prize of the upward call of God in Christ Jesus. It's a little later on in these lectures that I'll treat the verses I read just previously about being found in Christ and having God's righteousness and so forth.

But for now, I'll treat that when I discuss in Christ's language because that is one of the six places in Paul in which Christ not only indirectly speaks of union, as all the passages do, but directly speaks of union with Christ and therefore union with Christ in justification. But the words I wanted immediately for us to focus on are in verses 12-14. Paul is accepted by God in Christ.

But he also strives to live a Christian life. He works hard. He strains.

He struggles. Colossians 1, the last verse, he toils. But he quickly adds, he toils according to the power of God at work in him in that Colossians 1 text.

Colossians 1:29. For this, presenting every person maturing in Christ Jesus, I toil, I labor, struggling with all his energy that he powerfully works within me. Paul doesn't strive for God's acceptance.

He's not trying to be saved by his performance. He already has that by grace through faith. But he struggles with his own sins as he longs for the resurrection of his body.

Here is how he expresses it. Quote, I press on toward the goal for the prize of the upward call of God in Christ Jesus, verse 14. In Christ, Jesus is more than likely used causally.

Paul's upward call is in Christ Jesus, that is, because of the person and saving accomplishment of Christ. Philippians 4:19. Again, this shows some variety in Paul's use of union with Christ.

Paul acknowledges the Philippians, in the fact that he allowed them to contribute to him. It was a great compliment. It means he had real confidence about them and their own relationship with the Lord that this would not breed any dissension or criticism in their midst.

Not that I seek a gift, but I seek the fruit that increases your credit. Philippians 4-18. I have received the full payment and more.

I'm well supplied, having received from Epaphroditus the gifts you sent, a fragrant offering, a sacrifice acceptable and pleasing to God. And my God shall supply every need of yours according to his riches in glory in Christ Jesus. To our God and Father be glory forever and ever.

Amen. The Apostle expresses confidence that God will meet the Philippians' needs. Probably in Christ, Jesus qualifies riches in glory and is used to mark association.

God's glorious riches are so linked with Christ in Paul's mind that he easily associates the one with the other. My God will supply every need of yours according to his riches in glory in Christ Jesus, associated with Christ Jesus. We note that Paul here does not observe the first-century Roman custom of the giving and receiving of gifts.

There was no notion of grace in Roman society. Gifts were given and were an obligation on the part of the receiver. They involved favor on the part of the giver because the receiver was obligated to the donor.

Not so with Paul. He acknowledges their gift. He thanks God for it.

He thanks them for it. And what he gives them in return is confidence that God will meet their needs. He does break with social convention in the name of grace.

Christians do not need to live that way. The whole Christian gospel breaks with social convention. God loves sinners unconditionally, and they can't even give anything back to him if they want.

What he claims is our whole lives as Calvin taught so effectively. Colossians 1:13 and 14. So starting with 11, Colossians 1. May you be strengthened with all power according to his glorious might for all endurance and patience with joy, giving thanks to the Father who has qualified you to share in the inheritance of the saints in light.

He has delivered us from the domain of darkness and transferred us to the kingdom of his beloved son, in whom we have redemption, the forgiveness of sins. Paul speaks of God the Father saving believers from the kingdom of darkness of sin and judgment, which means putting them into another kingdom, that of his beloved son, verse 13. This kingdom transfer is the key to understanding the use of in whom in verse 14.

God delivered us from the domain of darkness and transferred us to the kingdom of his beloved son in whom we have redemption, the forgiveness of sins. This is the familiar locative use that has to do with location or placement, which is used figuratively to speak of Christ's realm or domain or kingdom in the realm of God's beloved son. Christians have redemption and forgiveness.

They actually have all the blessings of God. Redemption and forgiveness are mentioned here. Or how about Colossians 1:27 and 28.

To them, God's saints, God chose to make known how great among the Gentiles are the riches of the glory of this mystery, which is Christ in you, the hope of glory. Him we proclaim, Christ in you, warning everyone and teaching everyone with all wisdom that we may present everyone matures in Christ. For this, I toil, struggling with all his energy, which he powerfully works within me.

Writing to Gentiles, Paul here describes in grand terms the salvation God has revealed to the saints. The riches of the glory of this mystery, verse 27. The mystery refers to God's great work in Christ, which was only fully revealed when Christ came and poured out the spirit into the church.

We tend to skip over the word glory because it is hard to define. P.T. O'Brien corrects that practice. Quote, the apostle wished to emphasize that this wonderful mystery partook of the glory, the character of God himself.

By riches, Paul points to the lavish bestowal of his blessings in Christ. P.T. O'Brien's commentary, *Colossians and Philemon*. What is this great mystery? Paul answers in 27.

It is Christ in you, the hope of glory, the beloved son of God, in whom we have redemption, the forgiveness of sins, who performs his saving work outside of us when he dies in our place and rises again on the third day. More than that, he deigns to live inside of Gentiles, those formerly outside of God's people. In fact, Christ indwells all believers, both Jews and Christians, Jew and Gentile.

In this intimate relationship, he is the source of our hope for future salvation. He is the hope of glory. His presence within us assures us of final glorification.

It is the proclamation of this Christ with appropriate warning and instruction that is God's primary means to bring his people to maturity. Paul's goal is to present every believer, quote, mature in Christ, close quote. The word present has forensic overtones, compared to its use in verse 22, and thus the idea is presenting everyone as mature in Christ, that is, before Christ, the judge and savior.

So, Campbell again. Believers work hard at living for God, verse 29, but they do so as Paul quote, with all his energy that he powerfully works within. Paul says me, we would say us, verse 29.

That is, the indwelling Christ empowers his people to toil for him and his kingdom. Colossians 2:9 and 10. See to it that no one takes you captive by philosophy and empty deceit according to human tradition, according to the elementary spirits of the world, and not according to Christ.

For in him, the whole fullness of deity dwells bodily, and you have been filled in him who is the head of all rule and authority. Paul has a very high Christology. These verses, Colossians 2, 9 and 10, form a key unit to help us understand union with Christ.

The first speaks of Christ's union with God. The second of our union with Christ. In Christ, the whole fullness of the deity dwells bodily.

That's Christ's union with God. You've been filled in him, filled in him who is the head of all rule and authority. That's God's union with us.

Campbell draws the theological implications of the correlation between God's union with his son and our union with the same son as forgiven sinners. Quote, it is better to understand in him as expressing union with Christ. This is one of those half-dozen places.

Again, I'll say it. Union with Christ language always presupposes a relationship between Christ and believers, but many times with another nuance. We keep seeing the locative sense of domain and agency and instrument and so forth.

But in half a dozen places, its very nuance is union with Christ. This is one of those six. It's better to understand in him as expressing union with Christ.

Believers are filled because of their union in him. The strength of this reading arises from the verses to either side of verse 10. Verse 2-9 speaks of the fullness of God dwelling in Christ bodily.

This does not mean that Christ's body is filled with God, but that through his union with God, Christ shares in the fullness of God's deity. Second, 2:11 speaks of being

circumcised in the circumcision of Christ. 2:12 refers to being buried with Christ in his baptism and being raised with him.

2:13 speaks of being made alive with him. These three verses thus contain several references to the realities that believers share with Christ through their union and participation with him. Given that its context so strongly commends union with Christ, in him in 2-10 is likewise best understood this way.

F. F. Bruce, in his commentary on Colossians, Philemon, and Ephesians, is succinct. Quote: Christians, by their union with him, participate in his life. If the fullness of deity resided in him, his fullness was imparted to them.

And in the argument of Colossians, the Colossian church does not need special supposed revelation from God that the Colossian heresy offered, nor special ceremonies apart from baptism in the Lord's Supper, which Christ ordained. No. Having Christ, they're complete, they're whole, they have all they need in him because all the fullness of deity dwells in him bodily and he has made them complete in himself.

He has filled them with himself and thereby with salvation. Colossians 3:1-4 is also instructive in this regard, remembering that 2:20 spoke of union with Christ in his death. If with Christ, Colossians 2:20, you died to the elemental spirits of the world, why, as if you still were alive in the world, do you submit to its regulations? 3:1, if then you've been raised with Christ, seek the things that are above where Christ is seated at the right hand of God.

Set your mind on things above, not on things that are on the earth. For you have died, and your life is hidden with Christ in God. When Christ, who is your life, appears, then you also will appear with him in glory.

Paul has been speaking against the program of the false teachers and their ascetic demands. They were teaching, among other things, that severe treatment of the human body is necessary to please God. Here, Paul repeats that message, quoting, set your minds not on things that are on the earth.

3:2, but his focus lies elsewhere. Positively, he points his readers in another direction altogether. Up, twice, he commands.

Seek the things that are above. Set your mind on things that are above, 1:2. Why? Because above is where Christ is seated at the right hand of God.

The antidote to the ruinous teaching of the false teachers is Christ, 2:8-15. The antidote to the futile asceticism of the false teaching is Christ, 16-23. I'll do that

again, because Paul applies Christ as the antidote to the poison, both of the intellectual poison and the practical poison.

Antidote to the false teaching, Christ, Colossians 2:8-15. Antidote to the false ethic, asceticism, Christ, 2, 16-23. So, it comes as no surprise when the Apostle points the Colossian Christians above where Christ is.

Specifically, Paul underscores our union with Christ in his story as motivation to seek him. When he tells his readers, you have died, 3:3, surely he means they have died with Christ, having said so in 2-20. He specifically mentions union with Christ in his resurrection.

Due to his readers' union with Christ in his death and resurrection, Paul says, your life is hidden with Christ in God, verse 3. Contrary to the ascetic doctrine of the false teachers, Paul's readers are to pursue Christ in their lives, Christ who is above. Does this mean they are to despise their earthly lives? Hardly, in the rest of chapter 3 the Apostle gives instructions for relating to one another in the church and to families at home. This is earthy teaching if you will, but it does not involve the denial of bodily appetites as a means of spirituality.

Remember, Paul says, your life is hidden with Christ in God, verse 3. Rather, it involves focusing on Christ in heaven and drawing strength from union with Christ for everyday life on earth. Amazingly, Paul takes our participation in Christ's narrative even further. We died with him, were buried with him, arose with him, ascended with him, and sat down in heaven with him.

And, in a sense, we even come again with him. This is what Paul means when he writes, quote, when Christ, who is your life, appears, then you also will appear with him in glory, plainly, when Christ appears as a reference to the second coming.

The fact that we'll appear with him in glory refers to our second coming, if you will, so to speak. We need to carefully define in what sense we have a second coming and in what sense we don't. Of course, our second coming, so to speak, is in union with Christ.

Douglas Mu, in his great Colossians commentary, it has become my favorite, comes to our aid. Quote: when he appears in glory at the time of his return, believers will appear with him. Our identification with Christ, now real but hidden, will one day be manifest.

Because Christ is now in us, we have the hope of glory, Colossians 1:27. And it is that same union expressed in the other direction, we in Christ, that will bring hope to its certain accomplishment, close quote. Our union with Christ is so comprehensive that Paul teaches we will, in a sense, come again with him.

Only at his return will our true spiritual identity be revealed. Now we only approximate to true persons we will be in glory. And we will be in glory and holiness in the resurrection.

Though it's little known, Paul speaks of the same truth in Romans 8:18 and 19.

Quote, I consider that the sufferings of this present time are not worth comparing with the glory that is to be revealed in us. For the creation waits with eager longing for the revealing, keyword of the sons of God, close quote.

The word translated revealing is apocalypse, more literally rendered revelation. This word is included in the title of scripture's last book, the Revelation of John, and frequently refers to Christ Jesus' return. And in Romans 8, 19, it refers to our return, so to speak.

The creation waits with eager longing for the revelation of the sons of God. How is it possible that we're going to have a revelation? The answer is, of course, because of union with Christ. John speaks of the same reality with different words.

Quote, beloved, we are God's children now, and what we will be has not yet appeared, but we know that when he appears, we shall be like him because we shall see him as he is. 1 John 3, 2. In sum, Paul's readers, lives, and futures are so bound up with the son of God that by virtue of union with him, Paul could speak of Christ, quote, who is your life for, for, of Colossians. In context, he's countering the claims of the false teachers that the Colossian Christians lack something.

To the contrary, the apostle insists they have all they need in union with Christ and are thus secure. Indeed, now their lives are hidden with Christ in God, verse 3. O'Brien expresses their and our joyous prospect. We, too, will share his life.

We, too, who share his life, will share his glorious epiphany."

We will continue our journey through Pauline texts on union with Christ. As a matter of fact, we will complete them in our next lecture and then move on to Paul's ideas pertaining to the same.

This is Dr. Robert Peterson in his teaching on the Holy Spirit and union with Christ. This is session 15, Foundations for Union with Christ in Paul, Ephesians, Philippians, and Colossians.