

Dr. Robert A. Peterson, The Holy Spirit and Union with Christ, Session 19, Union with Christ and the Biblical Story: Eternity Past, Creation, Fall, Incarnation, Christ's Work, and New Creation

© 2024 Robert Peterson and Ted Hildebrandt

This is Dr. Robert Peterson in his teaching on the Holy Spirit and Union with Christ. This is session 19, Union with Christ and the Biblical Story: Eternity Past, Creation, Fall, Incarnation, Christ's Work, and New Creation.

We are ready to talk about Union with Christ and the Biblical Story. We have laid a foundation for union with Christ in the Old Testament, Synoptic Gospels, and Book of Acts. We then explored union with Christ in John's Gospel and then, for many lectures, union with Christ in Paul, who is the crown of this teaching.

It's time to step back and look now at the whole Biblical Story and what it teaches about union with Christ. I'll briefly just read the headings since I did a little bit with them in the last lecture. Union and Eternity Past, Union and Creation, Union and the Fall, Union and the Incarnation, Union and Christ's Saving Work, and Union and the New Creation.

Union and Eternity Past. As we have seen, two Pauline passages teach that God chose his people for salvation before creation. Ephesians 1:3 and 4, Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has blessed us in Christ with every spiritual blessing in the heavenly places, even as he chose us in him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and blameless before him.

And then 2 Timothy 1:8 and 9, Do not be ashamed of the testimony about our Lord, nor of me, his prisoner, but share in suffering for the gospel by the power of God, who saved us and called us to a holy calling, not because of our works, but because of his own purpose and grace, which he gave us in Christ Jesus before the ages began. 2 Timothy 1:8 and 9. In the former passage, Paul teaches that before creation, God chose to save sinners with the goal of final sanctification. In the latter, the Apostle encourages Timothy to be spiritually bold amid suffering by pointing him to God's power.

God saves us and calls us to present sanctification. We are saved not by our performance but by God's purpose, plan, and grace; his favor bestowed against our merit. And similar to what Paul said in Ephesians 1:4, this grace was granted us, quote, before the ages began, literally before eternal ages.

2 Timothy 1:9. It is arresting that in the two passages where Paul teaches that divine election was eternal, he also teaches that it was in Christ, even as he chose us in him before the foundation of the world, Ephesians 1:4. God saved us, not because of our works, but because of his own purpose and grace, which he gave us in Christ Jesus before the ages began. How are we to understand these two unusual usages of the common Pauline phrase, in Christ? There are at least three approaches to understanding the words God chose us in him before the foundation of the world. The first approach is advanced by Arminian scholars, for whom I have great respect and whom I receive as brothers in Christ, who understand in Christ as indicating a condition for salvation that people must meet.

Jack Cottrell takes this approach. God foreknows whether an individual will meet the condition for salvation which he has sovereignly imposed. The basic and all-encompassing condition is whether a person is in Christ, namely whether one has entered into a saving union with Christ by means of which he shares in all the benefits of Christ's redeeming work.

That is the import of Ephesians 1:4, which says that he chose us in him, in Christ. A second approach, also used by Arminians, is to understand Paul's words to mean that God primarily chose Christ and secondarily chose human beings for salvation; namely those whom he foreknew would believe in Christ. Jerry Walls and Joseph D'Angelo adopt this approach.

Jesus himself is the chosen one, the predestined one. Whenever one is incorporated into him by grace through faith, one comes to share in Jesus' special status as chosen by God. This view of election must fully account, most fully accounts, for the corporate nature election, the decisive role of faith, and the overarching reliability of God's bringing people to their destined end.

Jack Cottrell's conditional election was in a book called *Grace Unlimited*, edited by Clark Pinnock. Jerry Walls and Joseph D'Angelo wrote *Why I Am Not a Calvinist*, and I might add that my former colleague Michael Williams and I wrote a companion volume, *Why I Am Not an Arminian*. We do not debate each other, and we actually treat each other quite well.

It's really good that way. But if you want to get the different viewpoints, *Why I Am Not a Calvinist* by Walls and D'Angelo, *Why I Am Not an Arminian* by Peterson and Williams, InterVarsity Press, you'll get the picture if you do that. Before introducing the third approach, I will critique the first two.

The first view errors because when Paul writes that He chose us in him before the foundation of the world, he does not mention a condition sinners must meet to be chosen by God. Paul's words do not tell of any human response. They tell of God's sovereign plan. Cottrell and other Arminian believers read foreseen faith into the

apostles' words in an attempt to harmonize their view of conditional election with Paul's words.

Moreover, the second approach also fails by reading ideas into Paul. God did choose Christ to be the divine-human redeemer, but that is not Paul's point in Ephesians 1. Instead, Paul teaches that God chose us in him. Verse 4 does not speak of the decisive role of faith.

They read into the passage the idea that "whenever one is incorporated into him by grace through faith, one comes to share in Jesus' special status as chosen by God." Instead, the passage emphasizes the decisive roles of God's sovereignty and grace. I take a third approach to Paul's words in Ephesians 1:3, and 4. As we saw previously, the apostle frequently employs in Christ, in him, and synonyms to refer to union with Christ.

How does Paul's regular use of in Christ, referring to union with him, differ from his use of it in the context of pre-temporal election? The difference is temporal. Paul almost always speaks of people being joined to Christ in history. But in Ephesians 1:4 and 2 Timothy 1:9, he speaks of election to Christ in Christ.

He speaks of election in Christ before creation. In these two places, in Christ does not indicate actual union because we did not exist before creation. Rather, Paul tells of God's sovereign plan to unite us to Christ.

Thus, when Paul writes he chose us in him before the foundation of the world, he means that prior to creation, God out of his own will and love both chose to save his people and also planned the means to save them. He planned to bring them into spiritual union with his Son and all his spiritual benefits. 2 Timothy 1:9, it's the same for 2 Timothy 1:9. We are delivered from our sins not because of our works but because of his own purpose and grace.

Note that this text does not make God's election of his people contingent upon human beings' response to the gospel. It explicitly denies our efforts can rescue us and focuses instead on God, who grants salvation because of his own purpose and grace, that is, his sovereign will and compassion. When Paul says that grace was granted us in Christ Jesus before the ages began, he means that God's gracious choice of us in eternity involved his plan to join us to his Son so that we would experience salvation.

Saving grace would unfailingly come to God's chosen people due to God's sovereign and gracious plan. These two passages teach that union was far from an afterthought on God's part. Amazingly, even his choice of sinners prior to creation included union with Christ.

When God chose sinners for salvation, he chose also to unite them to Christ so they would experience salvation. That is, he planned to send his Son in the incarnation to live a sinless life, die, arise, and pour out the Spirit at Pentecost. The Spirit would apply the salvation that Jesus accomplished by spiritually joining us to Christ.

Thus, the Father chose us in Christ and gave us grace in Christ Jesus before the ages began. Union and Creation Union with Christ, planned from eternity, takes place in time. The Holy Spirit effectively brings believing sinners together with Christ in salvation.

By grace through faith, he joins them to the Son of God. But to move immediately from election to faith to Christ, to faith union with him, is to skip three essential steps in the story. Moving backward, Pentecost, the Incarnation, and humankind's being created in God's image are all necessary preconditions for union with Christ.

First, Christ pouring out the Holy Spirit at Pentecost was necessary for the Spirit to unite sinners to Christ.

Second, the Incarnation of the Eternal Son, his becoming one with us in our humanity, was essential for his accomplishing our salvation, including dying, rising, and bestowing the Spirit. It is also essential in establishing a fraternity between him and us so that we can be joined to him spiritually.

Third, human beings' creation in the image and likeness of God, which established a compatibility between us and him, was necessary for us to be joined to Christ. This is our current occupation. So, we're saying the next three steps in the story are creation, Incarnation, and Pentecost.

Let's take them one at a time. Image of God. Union with Christ rests on the fact of humans' special creation by God.

Though as creatures, we are very different from God in important ways, as his image bearers, we are like him. Robert Lethem is succinct. Quote, Union with Christ rests on the basis of the creation of man and woman to be compatible with God.

Close quote. Letham, *Union with Christ in Scripture, History, and Theology*. This is a consequence of our being made like God.

Genesis records that God said, Let us make man in our image, after our likeness. And let him have dominion over the fish of the sea, over the birds of the heavens, over the livestock, over all the earth, and over every creeping thing that creeps on the earth. So, God created man in his own image.

In the image of created him, male and female, he created them. Genesis 1:26, 27. The image of God in men and women as God's creatures is elusive.

Many elements seem to be involved, including our very structure, our roles, and our capacity for relationships. It is this last element that concerns us now. Quoting Lethem again, because human beings were created in the image of God, they were made for communion with God, to rule God's creation on his behalf.

Close quote. God made us for Himself and in fellowship with Himself. Adam and Eve were created neither as sinners nor as innocent beings, which is not good or evil, but as holy beings in fellowship with the Holy God.

To appreciate that God made us compatible with himself and for fellowship with him, it's important to underline the immense differences between God and us. Isaiah 40:22. It is he who sits above the circle of the earth, and its inhabitants are like grasshoppers.

Isaiah 40:22. And then 28. The Lord is the everlasting God, the creator of the ends of the earth.

Isaiah 57:15. He is the one who is high and lifted up, who inhabits eternity, whose name is holy. Isaiah 57:15.

Compared to him, quote, all the nations, there is nothing before him. He accounts them as less than nothing, an emptiness. Isaiah 40:17.

Over and over again, the Lord says, I'm the Lord, there's no other. Isaiah 45:5, 6, 18, and many more. Astonishingly, though there is such a great divide between the great God and us, he made us in his image.

And thus, we are like him in important ways. Philip Hughes explains in his book, the true image, the origin and destiny of man in Christ. Quote, the knowledge that the being of God is essentially and eternally personal is indeed a particular moment for our theme.

In creating man, God created a personal being, who, in a manner impossible for other animate creatures, is capable of personal fellowship with and personal response to his creator. The fact that man is a person, from a Person, capital P, man is a person, small p, from a Person, capital P, explains his ability to interact as a person to capital P Person. Christ, the true image.

Perhaps some were surprised to see that even God's eternal election involved Christ. We were chosen in him, and we're given grace in him. But it should come as no

surprise that when contemplating humankind as created in God's image, we turn our attention to Christ, the true image of God.

For Paul says that Christ is the image of God, 2 Corinthians 4:4. The image of the invisible God, Colossians 1, 15. In fact, Christ as God's image forms a bridge between human beings as made in God's likeness and Christ's incarnation. Christ as image helps us to understand humankind as image bearers.

Let them elucidate. Genesis states that the man and his wife were created in the image of God. The image of God is identical for us, is identified.

The image of God from Genesis is identified for us in the New Testament. Paul points out that it is Christ who is the image of God. 2 Corinthians 4:4, Colossians 1:15.

In Paul's thought, Christ as a second Adam is the image of God. Adam was created in Christ and then fell from that condition. But now, in grace, we are being renewed in the image of God, in Christ, the second Adam, and thus in knowledge, righteousness, and holiness.

The image of God in humankind both puts us under God and over the other creatures and, at the same time, makes us compatible, I speak reverently, with God himself. That Christ is the true image of God means we were made like Christ in the beginning, as Hughes explains. Man alone has affinities that reach both downward within the world over which he has been placed and upward to the Creator, who is the Lord of all beings.

The truth that lies behind this double linkage is, first of all, that man is God's creature.

Secondly, that man alone of God's creatures is formed in the image of God.

Thirdly, the eternal Son is the image in accordance with which man was formed.

The deeply intimate bond that binds man to the second person of the Godhead is thus constitutional to the very being of human beings. Our compatibility with God because we were made in the image of his Son helps us begin to understand the incarnation of the eternal Son. We shall return to this theme after we consider union with Christ and the fall.

Scripture lists many different results of the fall of our first parents into sin, including guilt, whose antidote is justification, and condemnation, whose antidote is the same. Corruption, whose antidote is progressive sanctification, or even better, sanctification in all of its dimensions, initial, progressive, and final. Suffering, shattered relationships, bondage, alienation from God, bondage whose antidote is

redemption, alienation from God, whose antidote is reconciliation, and disorder, whose antidote is the order brought by the second Adam.

I'll do that again, not talking about the antidotes. Scripture lists many results of the fall, including guilt and condemnation, corruption, suffering, shattered relationships, bondage, alienation from God, and disorder. Even the very creation is marred, for God cursed the ground because of Adam's transgression.

Genesis 3:17 and 18. Wonderfully, God, in his grace, overturns every one of those results of the fall through the work of Christ. The result of the fall that best illustrates humankind's need for a union with Christ is given most clearly in Ephesians 2. 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 at that time, you were 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. Ephesians 2:11 to 12, which we have visited before. Paul describes the horrible plight of his Gentile readers and of all unsaved people before they came to Christ.

In doing so, he expresses most clearly why lost human beings need to be joined spiritually to Christ because they are separated from Christ—verse 12. Tillman tells why Paul puts this first in his list of five deficiencies of the Gentiles, quoting Frank Tillman's *Commentary on Ephesians*.

This is the most important item on the list: separation from Christ. As its position indicates, it is at the head of the list, outside the two couplets used to express the other four problems. If every spiritual blessing of 1:4 to 13 is available only to those in Christ, 1:3, and if rescue from the grim plight detailed in 2:1 to 3 only comes to those in Christ, 2:5 to 6, then being outside Christ poses a problem of the first rank, separation from Christ.

Our need for union with Christ is that we are separated from him. At its root, union is a spatial concept used to communicate relational truths. It is as if Christ is over there having all the blessings of salvation, including forgiveness of sins and eternal life, and we are over here, separated from him.

We are separated from his person and all those benefits. It is only as the Holy Spirit bridges the gap and unites us to the Savior that we experience salvation. Until that time, we are outside of Christ and, therefore, have no hope and are without God in the world, Ephesians 2:12. Paul goes on to describe the remedy to our plight.

Now in Christ Jesus, Ephesians 2:13, you who once were far off have been brought near by the blood of Christ. The remedy for separation from Christ is union with him,

being brought near by his blood, being incorporated into God's family, and made part of his spiritual temple. Before time, God chose to save us by uniting us to Christ.

In time, he created us in his image, like him, and for fellowship with him. In fact, he made us in the image of his Son, the true image of God. But we rebelled against our first parents and, as a result, were separated from Christ.

Although God could have given up on us, he did not. He came to us in the incarnation of his Son. Philip Hughes helpfully connects Christ as image of God to the incarnation.

Quote, the doctrine of the image of God is the key to the factuality of the incarnation, no less than to the understanding of the true nature of man. The problem arising from the limitation of our being and horizon is, how can God become what he is not? How can God become one with his creatures for the purpose of restoring all things? The answer to that problem is, in the line that connects man to the second person of the Holy Trinity, that links image, small I, to image, capital I, that is the image of God at the center of man's being to the image who is God, the Son, the Son of God's deity and humanity. In becoming one with us in the incarnation, the eternal Son does not cease to be the eternal Son.

He continues to be God after the incarnation. So, we confess the deity of the incarnate Son. This is crucial, for only God can rescue us.

Yet the incarnation is necessary, for only the God-man can rescue us. Yet the incarnation is necessary because only the God-man can rescue us. He had to become one of us to die for us, defeat our enemy, and deliver us as Hebrews insists.

Quote, since the children share in flesh and blood, he himself likewise partook of the same things, that through death he might destroy the one who has the power of death, that is the devil, and deliver all those who through fear of death were subject to lifelong slavery, Hebrews 2:14 and 15. The Son's incarnation and union with him. Moreover, the incarnation is necessary also for union with Christ to occur, as Letham explains, quote, the basis of our union with Christ is Christ's union with us in the incarnation.

We can become one with him because he first became one with us. By taking human nature into personal union, the Son of God has joined himself to humanity. He now has a human body and soul, which he will never jettison.

Both John, the word became flesh and dwelt among us, and we beheld his glory, glory as of the only Son of the Father, full of grace and truth, John 1:14. And Paul, over and over again, teaches the incarnation of the Son of God. Philippians 2:5 to 8, have this mind among yourselves, which is yours in Christ Jesus, who though he was

in the form of God, did not count equality with God a thing to be grasped, but emptied himself, taking the form of a servant, being born in the likeness of men.

And being found in human form, he humbled himself by becoming obedient to the point of death, even death on a cross, Philippians 2:5 through 8. Like John, Paul holds to the incarnation to be that the incarnation is an essential part of Christ's mission, including pouring out the Spirit to effect union with Christ. In fact, it is difficult to overemphasize the importance of the incarnation when speaking of union with Christ. The incarnation does not in itself unite us to Christ, but it is an essential precondition for union.

Lethem is terse when he says, quote, Christ's union with us in the incarnation is the foundation for our union with him, both now and in the eternal future, close quote. The next step in understanding the Bible's teaching of union with Christ involves Jesus saving accomplishment, including what he did at Pentecost. The connection between the incarnation and Pentecost is drawn by Lethem.

Quote, Christ has completely identified himself with us. He is one with us. He everlastingly took our nature into personal union.

The incarnation is the indispensable basis for union with Christ. Since Christ has united himself to us in the incarnation, we can be united to him by the Holy Spirit. The Son of God is the only mediator in the world, and he did everything from becoming one of us to the second coming, which he hasn't done yet, in order to save us.

The heart and soul of a saving work is his dying in the place of sinners and being raised in the third day to victory. Does Christ's incarnation save in and of itself? The answer is no. As I have written in a previous volume, salvation does not come automatically to humankind when the eternal Son of God becomes a man.

But does Christ's incarnation save as the central precondition for the saving deeds that follow? The answer is yes. Only a divine-human redeemer would do. If the Son had not become a human being, he could not have lived a sinless human life, died, and risen again to deliver his people.

He could not have ascended, sat down at God's right hand, poured out the Holy Spirit, interceded for us, and he could not come again. To perform these saving works, he had to become one of us. In that important sense, Christ's incarnation saves as the essential prerequisite for his death and resurrection.

That's from my book, *Salvation Accomplished by the Son*, the Work of Christ. Pentecost. What does Christ's saving accomplishment have to do with union with him? The key here is Pentecost.

For the coming of the Spirit at Pentecost enables faith union with Christ. Pentecost is as much Christ's saving deed as his crucifixion and resurrection. We rightly think of the Holy Spirit when we think of Pentecost.

But it is important to realize that Christ was the one who poured out the Spirit at Pentecost. Pentecost is the fulfillment of John the Baptist's prophecy. John said, I will baptize you with water for repentance, but he who is coming after me is mightier than I, whose sandals I'm not worthy to carry.

He will baptize you with the Holy Spirit and fire, Matthew 3:11. It's also in Mark, Luke, and John. And it's the fulfillment of Jesus' words in Acts 1. In the fulfillment of Jesus' words are the fulfillment of John the Baptist's prophecy. In Matthew 3:11, Mark 1:7 and 8, Luke 3:16, John 1:32 to 34.

While staying with them, Luke wrote that he ordered them not to depart from Jerusalem but to wait for the promise of the Father, which he said you heard from me. For John baptized with water, but you'll be baptized with the Holy Spirit not many days from now. So, Jesus in Acts 1:4, and 5 deliberately ties back into John the Baptist's prophecy.

Pentecost is Jesus the Messiah's work as much as dying on the cross and rising from the dead are. It is as singular and unrepeatable as those works, too. It is a unique event in which the risen, ascended Lord Jesus baptizes his church with the Holy Spirit once for all time, accomplishing by this action great things.

Pentecost is a public event in which Christ proclaims the new covenant, inaugurates the new creation, and bestows the spirit on the new community. It is the last of these that concern us at present. The spirit whom Christ poured out on the church at Pentecost is the one who joins us to Christ.

Thus, Pentecost is the sending of the Spirit who enables faith union with Christ, as Lethem affirms. Quote, Christ eternal Son, having united human nature in himself, now unites us with himself by the Holy Spirit as the Spirit draws us to him in faith. This is not a personal union as the Spirit draws us to him as the Spirit draws us to him in faith.

That personal union we saw in the incarnation of the Son of God is totally unique. We don't become eternal, and we don't become gods. In this case, the Holy Spirit enters, indwells, saturates, and pervades countless human persons and sinners, bringing them into union with Christ the Son.

So, we're ready for the last step. We've seen union and eternity past, union and creation, union in the fall, union in the incarnation, and union in Christ's work,

especially of pouring out the Spirit at Pentecost, now union and the new creation. The goal of union with Christ is nothing less than the final salvation of the people of God and the deliverance of heaven and earth.

The creation itself was subject to the curse of the fall. After Adam's sin, God said to him, cursed is the ground because of you; in pain you shall eat of it all the days of your life, thorns, and thistles it shall bring forth for you. Genesis 3:17 and 18.

Scripture also predicts the deliverance of the cosmos, the coming of a new heaven and new earth. Isaiah 65:17 to 25, 66:22, 23, Matthew 19:28, Romans 8:20 to 22:2, 2 Peter 3:10 to 13, Revelation 21:22. One more time, Isaiah 65:17 to 25, Isaiah 66:22, 23, Matthew 19:28, Romans 8:20 to 22, 2 Peter 3:10 to 13, and Revelation chapters 21 and 22.

In God's plan, the work of Christ is the remedy for creation's malady. Christ's death and resurrection here have cosmic effects. Quote: God was pleased through Christ to reconcile all things to himself, whether things on earth or in heaven, making peace by the blood of his cross.

Colossians 1:19 and 20. Christ's saving accomplishment rescues not only human beings, but the world. Romans 8:20 to 22, the creation was subject to futility, not willingly, but because of him who subjected it.

In hope that the creation itself will be set free from its bondage to corruption and obtain the freedom of the glory of the children of God. For we know that the whole creation has been groaning together in the pains of childbirth until now. Romans 8:20 to 22.

Remarkably, Paul teaches that God will ultimately unite all things in Christ, which, again, we have previously seen. Now, we put it in the context of a biblical theology of union with Christ. Ephesians 1:7 to 10.

In him, in Christ, we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of our trespasses, according to the riches of his grace, which he lavished upon us in all wisdom and insight, making known to us the mystery of his will, according to his purpose, which he set forth in Christ as a plan for the fullness of time to unite all things in him, things in heaven and things on the earth. Ephesians 1:7 through 10. Paul expands the bounds of time and space when, after speaking of Christ's violent, redemptive death, his blood, he says that God revealed the mystery of his will to set forth in Christ as a plan for the fullness of time to unite all things in him.

This is one of several times Paul uses in Christ to show Christ's union directly. Believers will be united to Christ. Union with Christ, the spirit's application of Christ's death and resurrection, thus has cosmic effects in the end.

Revelation 22:3 is pithy. Quote, no longer will there be anything accursed. Revelation 22:3. And of course, union also has marvelous effects for the people whom God made for himself, who rebelled against him, for whom the incarnate son died and arose, and to whom the spirit applies to Jesus' saving work.

Indeed, Paul says that individual believers are already a part of the new creation. Quote, if anyone is in Christ, he's a new creation. The old has passed away.

Behold, the new has come. All this is from God, who through Christ reconciled us to himself. 2 Corinthians 5:17 and 18.

One blessing of faith union with Christ is divine indwelling. In fact, indwelling is, as we have seen, ongoing and living union with Christ. God gives us a spirit when he unites us to his son.

And that spirit not only unites us to Christ, but he comes to dwell within us. It is the spirit which unites us to Christ, and actually, the trinity, but especially the spirit that dwells within us. Because of God's great love for us in Christ, he has graciously allowed us to participate in his son's saving events.

As we saw, part of what it means to be united to Christ is to participate in his story. Paul teaches in Colossians alone, with Christ you died, 2:20. You've been raised with Christ, 3:1. You've died, and your life is hidden with Christ in God, verse 3. When Christ, who is your life, appears, then you also will appear with him in glory, verse 4. So, the final result of union with Christ in the new creation is the final resurrection and redemption of human beings and the final restoration of the heavens and the earth. I read a conclusion to this study of union with Christ throughout the Bible story.

This completes our survey of union with Christ in the biblical storyline. God the Father's eternal plan to save his people included planning to join them spiritually to his son. He made human beings in his image for fellowship with himself.

This means he made them in the likeness of the true image, his son. In the fall, however, they rebelled against his goodness and were separated from God and Christ. The son stooped to become a human being in the incarnation.

He became one of us so we could be united to him by grace through faith in the gospel. The incarnation enabled Jesus to live a sinless life, die, and rise, accomplishing the work of salvation. After ascending, Jesus poured out his Holy Spirit on the church, thereby joining believers to Christ.

This bond of the Spirit, known as faith union with Christ, is individual and corporate, present and permanent, definitive and growing, already and not yet. When Jesus returns, union will be complete and whole as God's resurrected people will live with the Holy Trinity for all eternity on the new earth. In our next lecture, Lord willing, we will engage in some systematic theology of union with Christ.

This is Dr. Robert Peterson in his teaching on the Holy Spirit and Union with Christ. This is session 19, Union with Christ and the Biblical Story: Eternity Past, Creation, Fall, Incarnation, Christ's Work, and New Creation.