

Dr. Robert A. Peterson, The Holy Spirit and Union with Christ, Session 5, Union with Christ: Old Testament Resources from NotebookLM

1) Abstract, 2) Audio podcast, 3) Briefing Document, 4) Study Guide, and 5) FAQs

1. Abstract of Peterson, The Holy Spirit and Union with Christ, Session 5, Union with Christ: Old Testament, Biblicalelearning.org, BeL

Dr. Robert Peterson's session explores the Old Testament foundations for the New Testament concept of union with Christ. The lecture posits that while the Old Testament doesn't explicitly teach union with Christ, it lays essential groundwork through the themes of **identification, incorporation, and participation**. **Identification** is shown through God's covenantal presence, granting his people a unique identity. **Incorporation** is illustrated by God creating a people for himself, foreshadowing the church as the body of Christ. Finally, **participation** involves God's people sharing in his story. These Old Testament concepts provide a crucial backdrop for understanding the New Testament doctrine of union with Christ.

2. 12 - minute Audio Podcast Created on the basis of Dr. Peterson, The Holy Spirit and Union with Christ, Session 5 – Double click icon to play in Windows media player or go to the Biblicalelearning.org [BeL] Site and click the audio podcast link there (Theology → Theology, Peterson → Holy Spirit and Union with Christ).



Peterson_HolySpirit
_Session05.mp3

3. Briefing Document: Peterson, The Holy Spirit and Union with Christ, Session 5, Union with Christ: Old Testament

Briefing Document: Old Testament Foundations for Union with Christ

Overview:

This briefing document summarizes the main themes and important ideas presented by Dr. Robert A. Peterson in Session 5 of his teaching on "The Holy Spirit and Union with Christ," focusing specifically on the Old Testament foundations for this New Testament doctrine. Dr. Peterson argues that while the Old Testament does not explicitly teach "union with Christ," it lays crucial groundwork through key concepts that foreshadow and enable a deeper understanding of it. He emphasizes that understanding union with Christ does not emerge in a vacuum but builds upon the narrative and concepts introduced in the Old Testament. The primary concepts explored in this session are **identification, incorporation, and participation**, which God uses in his relationship with his Old Testament people.

Main Themes and Important Ideas:

1. The Old Testament as Foundation:

- Dr. Peterson asserts that the Old Testament provides the foundation for every New Testament teaching, including union with Christ.
- "The Old Testament provides the foundation for every New Testament teaching, including union with Christ, because it tells so much of the biblical story. Union with Christ does not emerge from a void but rather fills out concepts introduced in the Old Testament, which foreshadows these concepts, foreshadowing with Christ."
- He credits Kyle Keating for significant help in developing these foundation sections.
- This material is highlighted as being relatively unique and primarily found in Dr. Peterson's book, "Salvation Applied by the Spirit, Union with Christ."

2. Three Foundational Concepts:

- Dr. Peterson identifies three primary concepts in the Old Testament that lay the groundwork for understanding union with Christ: **identification, incorporation, and participation**.

- These same three concepts will be used to analyze the Synoptic Gospels and Acts in subsequent sessions.
- **Identification:** This refers to God identifying with his people through his presence, thereby giving them a distinct identity.
- "Identification refers to God identifying with his people through his presence and, in this way, giving them an identity."
- God's covenantal presence with Israel gave them a unique identity among the ancient Near Eastern nations.
- This foreshadows the identity of believers in Jesus as those "in Christ," a prominent theme in Paul's letters (e.g., 1 Corinthians 1:2).
- The tabernacle in Exodus is presented as a tangible demonstration of God's desire to dwell in the midst of his people, signifying his identification with them. "Let them make me a sanctuary, that I may dwell in their midst" (Exodus 25:8).
- The presence of the tabernacle signifies God's desire to be with his people, but access was only possible through sacrifice, highlighting God's ordained way.
- God's commitment to be their God (Genesis 17) and claim them as his people underscores this identification.
- Moses' intercession in Exodus 33 emphasizes that the people's identity and distinctiveness were bound to God's presence. "For how shall it be known that I have found favor in your sight, I and your people, is it not in your going with us, so that we are distinct, I and your people, from every other person on the face of the earth?" (Exodus 33:16).
- Leviticus 26:11-13, where God promises to "make my dwelling among you," "walk among you," and "be your God," further illustrates this theme.
- Paul quotes Leviticus 26:11-12 in 2 Corinthians 6:16, connecting God's presence with his Old Testament people to the union of the church with the living God. "What agreement does the temple of God have with idols? For we are the temple of the living God; as God said, 'I will make my dwelling among them and walk among them, and I will be their God, and they shall be my people.'"
- Isaiah 7:14, prophesying the birth of Emmanuel ("God with us"), provides another glimpse into the future fulfillment of God's presence with his people. Matthew 1:22-23 explicitly connects this prophecy to the arrival of Jesus.

- Ezekiel 37 speaks of God setting his sanctuary in the midst of his people forevermore, with God dwelling with them and being their God, pointing towards an eschatological fulfillment of God's presence.
- **Incorporation:** This refers to God creating a people for himself, beginning with Abraham and Sarah, and continuing with the deliverance from Egypt where they were corporately made his people.
- "Incorporation refers to God's creating a people for himself."
- The miraculous birth of Isaac and Jacob, and the subsequent formation of the tribes of Israel, exemplifies God creating a people.
- This foreshadows believers in Christ being incorporated into the body of Christ, the church.
- Union with Christ is presented as both an individual and a communal/corporate principle of salvation.
- **Participation:** This refers to God's people sharing in God's story and even the life of God through their experiences in faithfully following him.
- "Participation refers to God's people sharing in God's story and even the life of God by virtue of their own experiences in faithfully following him."
- Despite Israel's frequent unfaithfulness, they still participated in God's narrative as his chosen people.

3. God's Commitment and Character:

- Dr. Peterson emphasizes God's consistent desire to be present with his people despite their sin and rebellion, as seen in Genesis 3:9.
- He highlights the complexity of God's character – holy and just, yet also gracious and loving – which allows a holy God to dwell among a sinful people.
- God's commitment to his covenant relationships is crucial. The images of dwelling with, walking among, and being their God in Leviticus 26 all speak to this relational aspect.

4. Eschatological Perspective:

- The Old Testament also points towards a future, eschatological fulfillment of God's presence with his people, established eternally.

- The picture of God walking in the Garden of Eden before the fall illustrates the original state of God's presence and fellowship with humanity.
- The visible manifestations of God's presence during the Exodus (pillar of fire and cloud) further underscore this theme.

5. Fulfillment in Christ:

- The conclusion of the session emphasizes that God's commitment to unite himself with his people through his identifying presence is ultimately fulfilled in the incarnation of Jesus Christ.
- "God's commitment to unite himself to his people by his identifying presence is fulfilled ultimately in his identification with them by becoming one of them. As the eternal Son of God takes to himself flesh, that is, a human body and soul..."
- The incarnation, where "the Word became flesh and dwelt among us" (John 1:14), signifies God tabernacling with his people.
- Jesus' promise in Matthew 28:20, "behold, I am with you always, to the end of the age," reaffirms this commitment.
- The sending of the Holy Spirit at Pentecost unites New Testament believers to Christ and gives them the identity of being "in Christ" as God's people.

Key Quote:

- "We are not claiming the Old Testament teaches union with Christ. We are claiming it lays foundations, especially in this regard, with identity, the covenantal presence of God, identifying him as their God and them as his people, which is the foundation."

Looking Ahead:

The next session will focus on the second foundational aspect: incorporation and membership in God's covenantal people.

4. Study Guide: Peterson, The Holy Spirit and Union with Christ, Session 5, Union with Christ: Old Testament

Study Guide: Old Testament Foundations for Union with Christ

Key Concepts:

- **Identification:** God identifying with his people through his presence and covenant, thereby giving them a distinct identity.
- **Incorporation:** God creating a people for himself, forming a corporate identity through covenant and historical events like the Exodus.
- **Participation:** God's people sharing in God's story and, to some extent, the life of God through faithful obedience and experience.
- **Covenant:** A binding agreement between God and his people, establishing relational obligations and promises.
- **Presence of God:** God's intentional dwelling with and among his people, signifying his identification and commitment to them.
- **Tabernacle/Temple:** Physical manifestations of God's presence among his people, symbolizing his desire to dwell with them.
- **Emmanuel:** A name for Jesus, meaning "God with us," signifying the ultimate fulfillment of God's presence.
- **Monergism:** The theological view that God alone initiates and effects salvation.
- **Bilateral:** In the context of covenant, refers to the responsibilities and obligations placed upon God's people in response to God's initiative.
- **Eschatological:** Relating to the end times or the ultimate fulfillment of God's plan.

Quiz:

1. According to Peterson, what is the greatest salvific work of the Holy Spirit?
2. What are the three primary concepts that Peterson uses to examine the foundations for union with Christ in the Old Testament?
3. Explain how God's covenantal presence with Israel provided them with a unique identity in the ancient Near East.

4. Describe how the tabernacle in the Old Testament demonstrated God's desire to identify with his people.
5. What was the significance of Moses' intercession for the people after the golden calf incident in relation to God's presence?
6. According to Leviticus 26:11-13, what three relational images describe God's commitment to his people?
7. How does Paul in 2 Corinthians 6:16 use Old Testament passages to illustrate the church's union with God in Christ?
8. Explain the significance of the name Emmanuel in Isaiah 7 and Matthew 1 in the context of God's presence.
9. According to Ezekiel 37, how does the prophecy of the greater David relate to God dwelling with his people in the future?
10. According to Peterson, how does the incarnation of Christ represent the ultimate fulfillment of God's commitment to identify with his people?

Answer Key:

1. According to Peterson, the greatest salvific work of the Holy Spirit is uniting believers to Christ. This union is the central theme of his lectures on the Holy Spirit.
2. The three primary concepts Peterson uses are identification, incorporation, and participation. He examines how these concepts are present in the Old Testament, the Synoptic Gospels, and Acts as foundations for union with Christ.
3. God's covenantal presence with Israel, through claiming them as his own and relating to them by covenant, distinguished them from other nations. His promises and dwelling among them gave them a unique identity in the ancient Near East.
4. The tabernacle was a tangible demonstration of God's desire to be present with his people, serving as his dwelling place in their midst. Its very existence and design symbolized both invitation to God and the necessity of approaching him through his ordained means.
5. Moses' intercession was based on the understanding that God's presence was essential to the people's identity as his distinct people. He argued that without

God's presence going with them, they would be no different from any other nation.

6. The three relational images are God making his dwelling among them, walking among them, and being their God. These images emphasize God's commitment to a close and personal relationship with his people.
7. Paul quotes Leviticus 26 in 2 Corinthians 6:16 to show that God's dwelling among his people in the Old Testament foreshadowed the spiritual union of believers with God in the church, which is now the temple of the living God.
8. The name Emmanuel, meaning "God with us," prophesied in Isaiah 7 and fulfilled in Matthew 1 with the arrival of Jesus, signifies the ultimate presence of God among his people. It highlights that God himself has come to dwell with humanity in the person of Jesus.
9. Ezekiel 37 prophesies that the greater David (the Messiah) will be king over spiritual Israel, and God will establish his sanctuary in their midst forever. This signifies a future, eschatological fulfillment of God's promise to dwell with and sanctify his people.
10. The incarnation of Christ, where the eternal Son of God took on human flesh, represents the ultimate act of God's identification with his people. By becoming one of them, God fulfilled his commitment to unite himself with humanity to deliver them and make them one with himself.

Essay Format Questions:

1. Discuss the concepts of identification and incorporation in the Old Testament and analyze how they lay the groundwork for the New Testament understanding of union with Christ. Provide specific examples from the Old Testament to support your claims.
2. Analyze the significance of the presence of God in the Old Testament, focusing on the tabernacle/temple and key interactions between God and his people (e.g., Moses' intercession). How does this theme foreshadow the concept of union with Christ?
3. Explain the relationship between the Old Testament covenants (e.g., Abrahamic, Mosaic) and the idea of God creating and identifying with a people for himself. How do these covenants provide a foundation for understanding the nature of union with Christ as a covenantal relationship?
4. Examine the eschatological dimension of God's presence in the Old Testament, particularly as seen in prophecies like Ezekiel 37 and the initial fellowship in the Garden of Eden. How do these passages point towards a future, complete union between God and his people in Christ?
5. Critically evaluate Peterson's claim that while the Old Testament does not explicitly teach "union with Christ," it lays essential foundations for this doctrine. Discuss the strengths and potential limitations of using Old Testament concepts like identification, incorporation, and participation to understand New Testament union with Christ.

Glossary of Key Terms:

- **Identification:** In this context, God's act of associating himself with his people through covenant and presence, granting them a distinct status and identity.
- **Incorporation:** The process by which God creates and forms a unified people for himself, both in the Old Testament (Israel) and the New Testament (the Church, the body of Christ).
- **Participation:** The idea that God's people share in his story, his purposes, and even aspects of his life through faith and obedience, as seen in their relationship with him in the Old Testament.
- **Covenant:** A solemn and binding agreement between God and humanity, outlining the terms of their relationship, including promises and responsibilities.
- **Presence of God:** God's active and intentional dwelling with and among his people, signifying his favor, guidance, and commitment to them.
- **Tabernacle:** A portable sanctuary commanded by God for the Israelites, serving as a physical manifestation of his presence among them. It foreshadowed the ultimate dwelling of God with humanity in Christ.
- **Temple:** A permanent structure built in Jerusalem to house the Ark of the Covenant and serve as the central place of worship, symbolizing God's continued presence with his people.
- **Emmanuel:** A Hebrew name meaning "God with us," used in Isaiah's prophecy (Isaiah 7:14) and applied to Jesus in Matthew's Gospel (Matthew 1:23) to signify his identity as God incarnate, dwelling among humanity.
- **Monergism:** A theological doctrine that asserts that God is the sole active agent in salvation, initiating and accomplishing it without dependence on human will.
- **Bilateral:** In relation to covenants, it describes agreements that involve mutual obligations and responsibilities between the parties involved, though often initiated by one party (in this case, God).
- **Eschatology:** The branch of theology concerned with the final events of history, or the ultimate destiny of humanity and the universe, including concepts like the return of Christ, the resurrection, and the final state of believers and unbelievers.

5. FAQs on Peterson, Christ's Saving Work, The Holy Spirit and Union with Christ, Session 5, Union with Christ: Old Testament, Biblicalelearning.org (BeL)

Frequently Asked Questions: Old Testament Foundations for Union with Christ

1. What is the primary focus of this lecture by Dr. Peterson? This lecture, the fifth session on "The Holy Spirit and Union with Christ," focuses on the foundations laid in the Old Testament that help us understand the New Testament concept of union with Christ. While the Old Testament doesn't explicitly teach union with Christ, it introduces key concepts that foreshadow and provide the necessary background for this doctrine.

2. What are the three primary concepts from the Old Testament that lay the foundation for union with Christ? Dr. Peterson highlights three primary concepts: identification, incorporation, and participation. These concepts describe how God related to his people in the Old Testament and how these relationships foreshadow the union believers have with Christ in the New Testament.

3. How does the concept of "identification" function as a foundation for union with Christ in the Old Testament? Identification in the Old Testament refers to God identifying with his people through his covenantal presence. By claiming them as his own and relating to them through covenants, God gave the Israelites a unique identity among the nations. This is a foundational concept that anticipates the identity believers receive in the New Testament as those who are "in Christ."

4. In what ways did God demonstrate his "incorporation" of his people in the Old Testament? Incorporation refers to God's act of creating a people for himself. Starting with Abraham and Sarah, God miraculously brought forth Isaac, Jacob, and the tribes of Israel, forming a distinct community. This foreshadows the New Testament reality where believers in Christ are incorporated into the body of Christ, the church, both individually and corporately.

5. How did the people of God in the Old Testament "participate" in God's story? Participation in the Old Testament involved God's people sharing in God's story and, to some extent, the life of God through their experiences of faithfully following him. Despite their failures, God remained faithful, and they participated in his narrative as his chosen people, meant to be a light to the world. This anticipates the deeper participation believers have with Christ in his life, death, and resurrection through union with him.

6. How does the Old Testament tabernacle illustrate God's identification with his people? The command to build the tabernacle and God's promise to dwell in their midst (Exodus 25:8-9) is a tangible demonstration of God's desire to identify with his people through his presence. The tabernacle symbolized God's commitment to be with them, giving them a unique identity and signifying a form of union, as referenced by Paul in 2 Corinthians 6:16.

7. How does the prophecy of Emmanuel in Isaiah 7 connect the Old Testament idea of God's presence to the New Testament? The prophecy in Isaiah 7:14, stating that a virgin would bear a son named Emmanuel ("God with us"), foreshadows the ultimate fulfillment of God's presence with his people in the person of Jesus Christ. Matthew's Gospel (1:22-23) explicitly connects this prophecy to the birth of Jesus, highlighting the incarnation as the ultimate act of God identifying with humanity.

8. How does the Old Testament emphasis on God's covenantal presence lay the groundwork for understanding union with Christ? The consistent theme throughout the Old Testament of God's desire and commitment to be present with his covenant people, despite their sin, establishes a crucial foundation for understanding union with Christ. The incarnation, where God becomes one with humanity in Jesus, and the sending of the Holy Spirit at Pentecost to unite believers to Christ, are the culmination of this long-standing pattern of God's identifying presence with his people, as foreshadowed in the Old Testament.