

Dr. Robert A. Peterson, The Holy Spirit and Union with Christ, Session 12, Foundations Union in Paul, Romans, 1 Corinthians,

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 12, Foundations Union in Paul, Romans, 1 Corinthians, Biblicalelearning.org, BeL

Dr. Robert Peterson's lecture, Session 12, focuses on the theological concept of union with Christ as presented in Paul's letters to the Romans and Corinthians. The session meticulously examines various passages, exploring the foundations of this doctrine, including baptism as a participation in Christ's death and resurrection. Peterson highlights how being "in Christ" signifies a new identity, receiving spiritual blessings like righteousness, sanctification, and redemption. He further discusses the believer's adoption as children of God through the Holy Spirit and their inheritance as co-heirs with Christ. Ultimately, the lecture emphasizes that all things belong to those united with Christ, urging believers toward humility and unity.

2. 19 - minute Audio Podcast Created on the basis of Dr. Peterson, The Holy Spirit and Union with Christ, Session 12 – 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
_Session 12.mp3

3. Briefing Document: Peterson, The Holy Spirit and Union with Christ, Session 12, Foundations Union in Paul, Romans, 1 Corinthians

Briefing Document: Foundations for Union with Christ in Paul (Romans and 1 Corinthians)

Overview: This briefing document summarizes Dr. Robert A. Peterson's lecture (Session 12) on the foundational Pauline texts concerning "Union with Christ," specifically focusing on passages from Romans and 1 Corinthians. Peterson emphasizes that Paul is central to understanding this doctrine and meticulously examines key verses to highlight the multifaceted nature and profound implications of believers' union with Christ.

Main Themes and Important Ideas/Facts:

1. Romans 6:1-14: Death and Resurrection with Christ in Relation to Sin:

- **Rebuttal of Antinomianism:** Paul addresses the false charge that his teaching on grace leads to the conclusion that believers should continue in sin so that grace may abound (Romans 6:1). He vehemently refutes this, asking, "How can we who died to sin still live in it?" (Romans 6:2).
- **Baptism as Union with Christ's Death and Resurrection:** Peterson highlights baptism as the pivotal point where believers are united with Christ in his death: "Do you not know that all of us who have been baptized into Christ Jesus were baptized into his death?" (Romans 6:3). This union signifies participation in Christ's story, including his burial and resurrection.
- **Death to Sin and Newness of Life:** Through union with Christ's death, believers have "died to sin" (Romans 6:2) and are enabled to "walk in the newness of life" (Romans 6:4), mirroring Christ's resurrection. "For if we have been united with him in a death like his, we shall certainly be united with him in a resurrection like his" (Romans 6:5).
- **Crucifixion of the Old Self:** Our "old self was crucified with him in order that the body of sin might be brought to nothing, so that we would no longer be enslaved to sin" (Romans 6:6). This signifies a break from the power of sin.
- **Living to God in Christ Jesus:** Believers are urged to "consider yourselves dead to sin and alive to God in Christ Jesus" (Romans 6:11). This shift in allegiance and life's orientation is a direct consequence of union with Christ.

- **Presenting Ourselves as Instruments of Righteousness:** Because of this union, believers are called to actively "present yourselves to God as those who have been brought from death to life, and your members to God as instruments for righteousness" (Romans 6:13).
- **Future Resurrection:** The union with Christ's death also guarantees participation in his future resurrection: "For if we have been united with him in a death like his, we shall certainly be united with him in a resurrection like his" (Romans 6:5). Peterson notes that while the benefits of Christ's death and resurrection apply now, these verses specifically point to the future resurrection of the body.
- **"In Christ" as Realm/Sphere:** Peterson, following Campbell, suggests that the phrase "in Christ Jesus" indicates being within the realm or sphere of Christ, signifying a new existence by virtue of union with him.

2. Romans 8:14-17: Adoption as Sons and Co-heirs with Christ through the Spirit:

- **Led by the Spirit as Evidence of Sonship:** "For all who are led by the Spirit of God are sons of God" (Romans 8:14). Peterson clarifies that "led" here signifies a consistent lifestyle of obedience to the Spirit.
- **The Spirit of Adoption:** Believers receive "the spirit of adoption as sons, by whom we cry, Abba, Father" (Romans 8:15). This highlights the intimate and familial relationship with God made possible through the Spirit. Peterson emphasizes the suitability of "Father" and "Son" as names within the Godhead for the doctrine of adoption.
- **Witness of the Spirit:** "The Spirit himself bears witness with our spirit that we are children of God" (Romans 8:16), providing an internal assurance of our adoption.
- **Inheritance as Heirs and Co-heirs:** As children of God, believers are also "heirs of God and fellow heirs with Christ" (Romans 8:17). Peterson points to 1 Corinthians 3:21-23, which states "all things are yours," including the Trinity and the redeemed creation, as part of this inheritance.
- **Suffering and Glorification with Christ:** The inheritance is tied to suffering with Christ: "provided we suffer with him in order that we may also be glorified with him" (Romans 8:17). True sonship is evidenced by participation in Christ's sufferings, which will lead to future glorification.

3. Romans 8:38-39: Security and Preservation in Christ's Love:

- **God's Unbreakable Love:** Peterson introduces this passage as the "greatest preservation passage in all of scripture." Paul expresses unwavering confidence that nothing can "separate us from the love of God in Christ Jesus our Lord" (Romans 8:39).
- **Arguments for Preservation:** Peterson outlines four arguments Paul makes for God's preservation of his people:
- **God's Plan (Romans 8:28-30):** Foreknowledge, predestination, calling, justification, and glorification form an unbroken chain in God's eternal plan.
- **God's Power and Commitment (Romans 8:31-32):** If God gave his own Son, he will surely provide all else needed for salvation. "If God is for us, who can be against us?" (Romans 8:31).
- **God's Justice (Romans 8:33-34):** God himself justifies, so no accusation can stand against his elect.
- **God's Love (Romans 8:35-39):** Nothing, "neither death nor life, nor angels nor rulers, nor things present nor things to come, nor powers, nor height nor depth, nor anything else in all creation," can sever believers from God's love in Christ.
- **Love of God "in Christ Jesus":** Following Campbell, Peterson interprets "in Christ Jesus" here as signifying that God's basis for keeping believers saved is the love of God *seen in* Christ Jesus.

4. Romans 12:4-5: The Church as One Body in Christ:

- **Unity and Diversity in the Body of Christ:** Paul uses the analogy of the human body with its many members and functions to illustrate the unity and diversity within the church.
- **Incorporation into Christ:** "So we, though many, are one body in Christ, and individually members one of another" (Romans 12:5). Peterson emphasizes that believers are incorporated into Christ, becoming members of his spiritual body, the church.
- **New Identity in Christ's Domain:** Being "in Christ" signifies being in Christ's domain and having a new identity as part of his body.

5. 1 Corinthians 1:30-31: Christ as Our Wisdom, Righteousness, Sanctification, and Redemption:

- **Salvation Originating from God:** "And because of him you are in Christ Jesus" (1 Corinthians 1:30). Peterson stresses that believers' union with Christ is a direct result of God the Father's action.
- **Unusual Direct Statement of Union:** Peterson notes the directness of "you are in Christ Jesus" as an unusual but key statement on union with Christ.
- **Blessings of Salvation "in Christ":** Peterson quotes Champa and Rosner who state, "To be saved is to be in Christ," highlighting the comprehensive nature of this phrase. It encompasses both objective standing before God and a new mode of eschatological existence.
- **Christ as Our All:** God made Christ "to us wisdom from God, righteousness, sanctification, and redemption" (1 Corinthians 1:30). These benefits are possessed by believers in union with Christ.
- **Wisdom:** Contrasts with worldly wisdom and is centered in the message of the crucified Christ.
- **Righteousness:** A forensic declaration of acquittal before God.
- **Sanctification:** God's setting us apart as holy and our ongoing growth in purity.
- **Redemption:** Deliverance from the bondage of sin through Christ's sacrifice.
- **Boasting in the Lord Alone:** The ultimate purpose of God's saving work in Christ is "so that, as it is written, 'Let the one who boasts, boast in the Lord'" (1 Corinthians 1:31, quoting Jeremiah 9:24). Human boasting is eliminated, and all praise belongs to God for his grace in Christ.

6. 1 Corinthians 3:21-23: All Things Belong to Believers Because They Belong to Christ:

- **Avoiding Boasting in Men:** Paul urges the Corinthians, who were dividing based on allegiance to different leaders, to "let no one boast in men, for all things are yours" (1 Corinthians 3:21).
- **Heirs of All Things Through Christ:** Because believers belong to Christ ("you are Christ's"), and Christ belongs to God ("and Christ is God's"), they are heirs of all things, including Christian leaders, the world, life, death, the present, and the future.

- **Identity in Christ as Foundation:** Dividing into factions demonstrates a failure to remember their fundamental identity "in Christ."

Conclusion:

Dr. Peterson's lecture provides a detailed textual survey of key Pauline passages in Romans and 1 Corinthians that lay the groundwork for understanding the doctrine of "Union with Christ." He emphasizes that this union, initiated through faith and often signified by baptism, results in a radical transformation in the believer's relationship with sin, God, and the world. Believers die and rise with Christ, are adopted as God's children through the Spirit, are secure in God's unwavering love displayed in Christ, are incorporated into the body of Christ (the church), receive all spiritual blessings in Christ, and ultimately find their identity and inheritance in belonging to Christ. The lecture underscores the comprehensive and foundational nature of union with Christ for all aspects of Christian life and theology.

4. Study Guide: Peterson, The Holy Spirit and Union with Christ, Session 12, Foundations Union in Paul, Romans, 1 Corinthians

Study Guide: Foundations for Union with Christ in Paul, Romans and 1 Corinthians

Key Concepts to Understand:

- **Union with Christ:** The believer's fundamental connection and incorporation into Jesus Christ, sharing in his life, death, and resurrection.
- **Baptism:** Its significance as a symbolic participation in Christ's death and resurrection, signifying union with him.
- **Death to Sin:** The believer's break from the dominion and enslavement of sin through union with Christ's death.
- **Newness of Life:** The transformed existence of the believer, empowered by Christ's resurrection, characterized by obedience to God.
- **Antinomianism:** The false charge against Paul that his teaching on grace led to the conclusion that believers were free to sin.
- **Adoption:** God's gracious act of welcoming believers into his family as sons and daughters, granting them rights and privileges.
- **Spirit of Adoption:** The Holy Spirit's role in enabling believers to call God "Abba, Father" and bearing witness to their sonship.
- **Inheritance:** The blessings and possessions believers receive as children of God and co-heirs with Christ, including all things in Christ.
- **Preservation:** God's commitment and power to keep those he has saved secure in his grace until the end.
- **Body of Christ:** A metaphor for the church, highlighting the unity and interdependence of believers as members incorporated into Christ.
- **Wisdom from God:** Christ himself as the divine wisdom, encompassing righteousness, sanctification, and redemption for believers.
- **Boasting in the Lord:** Shifting the focus of pride and confidence from human achievements to God's saving work in Christ.

Quiz:

1. According to Romans 6, what is the significance of baptism for believers in relation to Christ?
2. Explain Paul's response in Romans 6 to the charge of antinomianism arising from the doctrine of grace.
3. In Romans 8:15, what is the role of the Spirit of adoption in the believer's relationship with God?
4. According to Romans 8:17, what is the relationship between a believer's suffering and their future glorification?
5. List two of the four arguments Paul uses in Romans 8:28-39 to demonstrate God's preservation of his people.
6. How does Paul utilize the analogy of the human body in Romans 12:4-5 to describe the church?
7. In 1 Corinthians 1:30, what does it mean that Christ "became to us wisdom from God"?
8. Name three of the four benefits that are encompassed in Christ becoming "wisdom from God" according to 1 Corinthians 1:30.
9. In 1 Corinthians 1:31, why does Paul emphasize that believers should "boast in the Lord"?
10. According to 1 Corinthians 3:23, what is the significance of believers belonging to Christ and Christ belonging to God?

Quiz Answer Key:

1. Baptism signifies the believer's union with Christ in his death and resurrection. It symbolizes that just as Christ died to sin and was raised to new life, believers have also died to sin and are called to walk in newness of life through their identification with him.
2. Paul vehemently rejects the idea that grace should lead to continued sin. He argues that believers have died to sin through their union with Christ in baptism, so it is contradictory and illogical for them to continue living in it.
3. The Spirit of adoption enables believers to cry out to God as "Abba, Father," signifying an intimate and familial relationship with him. This demonstrates that

saving faith and the ability to truly address God as Father are gifts from God through the Spirit.

4. Believers are fellow heirs with Christ, but this inheritance is provided they suffer with him. This indicates that sharing in Christ's sufferings is a mark of genuine union and will be followed by sharing in his glorification.
5. Two of the four arguments are: (1) God's plan of foreknowledge, predestination, calling, justification, and glorification; (2) God's power and commitment demonstrated by not sparing his own Son; (3) God's justice in justifying his elect; and (4) God's unwavering love from which nothing can separate believers.
6. Paul uses the human body with its many members serving different functions as an analogy for the church as the body of Christ. Just as the diverse members form one unified body, believers, though many with different gifts, are one body in Christ and individually members of one another.
7. It means that through God's gracious action, Christ himself has become the source of divine wisdom for believers. This wisdom is not worldly but encompasses the blessings of salvation that God provides through union with Christ.
8. The three benefits unpacked from Christ becoming wisdom from God are righteousness (acquittal before God), sanctification (holiness and growth in purity), and redemption (deliverance from the bondage of sin).
9. Paul emphasizes boasting in the Lord to highlight that salvation is entirely due to God's grace and redemptive work in Christ. This eliminates human pride and directs all praise and glory to God alone for the gift of salvation.
10. This verse underscores the believer's identity and inheritance in Christ. Belonging to Christ signifies union with him and grants believers access to all things as heirs. Because Christ belongs to God, this further emphasizes God's ultimate authority and the source of all blessings.

Essay Format Questions:

1. Discuss the significance of baptism as presented in Romans 6 in relation to the believer's union with Christ and their break from the power of sin.
2. Analyze the role of the Holy Spirit in the doctrine of adoption as outlined in Romans 8, explaining how the Spirit enables believers to relate to God as Father.
3. Compare and contrast Paul's use of the "body of Christ" metaphor in Romans 12 and 1 Corinthians to illustrate the concept of union with Christ and its implications for the church.
4. Explore the meaning and implications of 1 Corinthians 1:30-31, focusing on how Christ becomes "wisdom from God" for believers and why boasting should be directed to the Lord.
5. Examine the concept of God's preservation of believers as presented in Romans 8:28-39, identifying the key arguments Paul uses to assure believers of their security in Christ.

Glossary of Key Terms:

- **Union with Christ:** The spiritual and mystical joining of a believer to Jesus Christ, resulting in a shared life and participation in his saving work.
- **Baptism:** A Christian sacrament symbolizing the believer's identification with Christ's death, burial, and resurrection, and their entrance into the Christian community.
- **Justification:** God's act of declaring a sinner righteous in his sight through faith in Jesus Christ, forgiving their sins and imputing Christ's righteousness to them.
- **Sanctification:** The ongoing process by which the Holy Spirit progressively transforms believers into the likeness of Christ, making them holy in their thoughts, desires, and actions.
- **Redemption:** The act by which Christ paid the penalty for sin through his death, purchasing believers from slavery to sin and Satan.
- **Adoption:** God's gracious act of bringing believing sinners into his spiritual family, granting them the status, rights, and privileges of sons and daughters.
- **Atonement:** Christ's work on the cross whereby he propitiated God's wrath and reconciled humanity to God through his sacrificial death.
- **Eschatology:** The theological study of last things, such as the second coming of Christ, the resurrection of the dead, and the final judgment.
- **Soteriology:** The theological study of salvation, including its nature, means, and effects.
- **Antinomianism:** The belief that Christians are freed from the moral law by grace and are therefore at liberty to disregard it.

5. FAQs on Peterson, Christ's Saving Work, The Holy Spirit and Union with Christ, Session 12, Foundations Union in Paul, Romans, 1 Corinthians, Biblicalelearning.org (BeL)

Frequently Asked Questions on Pauline Theology of Union with Christ

What is the significance of "union with Christ" in Paul's writings, particularly in Romans and 1 Corinthians?

In Pauline theology, "union with Christ" is a foundational doctrine that describes the believer's intimate and comprehensive connection to Jesus Christ. This union, achieved by grace through faith, means that believers participate in Christ's death, burial, and resurrection (Romans 6:1-4), share in his identity (1 Corinthians 1:30), and receive all spiritual blessings through him. It forms the basis for justification, sanctification, and our future glorification, shaping our understanding of salvation and Christian living.

How does baptism illustrate and enact our union with Christ according to Paul in Romans 6?

Paul argues in Romans 6:3-4 that baptism is not merely a symbolic act but signifies and enacts our union with Christ in his death and resurrection. By being baptized into Christ Jesus, believers are baptized into his death, signifying a break from the power of sin. Just as Christ was raised to new life, baptism points to our being raised to walk in newness of life, indicating a fundamental shift in our allegiance and identity through our incorporation into Christ's saving acts.

What role does the Holy Spirit play in our union with Christ, as highlighted in Romans 8?

In Romans 8:14-17, Paul emphasizes the crucial role of the Holy Spirit in our union with Christ. The Spirit of adoption enables believers to call God "Abba, Father," signifying our inclusion in God's family as adopted sons and daughters. Furthermore, the Spirit bears witness with our spirit that we are children of God and co-heirs with Christ, highlighting the intimacy and inheritance that result from our union mediated by the Spirit.

How does Paul address the misunderstanding that grace might encourage continued sin in light of our union with Christ (Romans 6:1-2)?

Paul vehemently rejects the notion that the abundance of grace justifies continuing in sin (Romans 6:1-2). He argues that believers, through their union with Christ in his death, have died to sin. Therefore, it is illogical for those who have died to sin to continue living in it. Our union with Christ signifies a radical break from the dominion of sin and a new life lived in obedience to God.

What are some of the benefits that believers receive through their union with Christ, according to 1 Corinthians 1:30?

1 Corinthians 1:30 provides a concise summary of the benefits believers receive through their union with Christ. God has made Christ to be our wisdom, which encompasses righteousness (our just standing before God), sanctification (our ongoing growth in holiness), and redemption (our deliverance from the bondage of sin). These blessings are not earned but are gifts bestowed upon us through our being "in Christ Jesus."

How does the metaphor of the "body of Christ" in Romans 12 and 1 Corinthians illustrate the concept of union with Christ and its implications for the church?

Paul uses the metaphor of the "body of Christ" (Romans 12:4-5, 1 Corinthians 12) to illustrate both the union of believers with Christ and their interconnectedness with one another. Just as the human body has many members with different functions yet forms one unified whole, so too the church, as the body of Christ, is composed of many individual believers who are united to Christ as their head and to each other as members. This metaphor emphasizes the diversity of gifts and the necessity of unity and mutual service within the Christian community, all stemming from their shared union with Christ.

How does Paul assure believers of their preservation in salvation through their union with Christ, as seen in Romans 8:38-39?

In Romans 8:38-39, Paul offers a powerful declaration of the security of believers in their union with Christ. He expresses his absolute conviction that nothing—neither death nor life, angels nor rulers, present nor future things, nor any other created thing—can separate us from the love of God that is in Christ Jesus our Lord. This passage underscores that God's love, manifested and experienced in our union with Christ, is an unbreakable bond that guarantees the eternal preservation of those who are in him.

How does the concept of "boasting in the Lord" in 1 Corinthians relate to the doctrine of union with Christ?

In 1 Corinthians 1:26-31, Paul highlights that God deliberately chose those whom the world considers foolish, weak, and lowly for salvation so that no one can boast before him. Instead, because of God's gracious action, believers are in Christ Jesus, who has become their wisdom, righteousness, sanctification, and redemption. Consequently, Paul quotes Jeremiah, stating, "Let the one who boasts, boast in the Lord" (1 Corinthians 1:31). This directive underscores that our union with Christ is entirely due to God's initiative and grace, redirecting all human pride and boasting to God alone for his saving work in Christ.