

Journey to Pentecost: The Spirit

Week 2 & Probably 3

Intro & Timeline

- Early Development of Pneumatology (Doctrine of Holy Spirit)
 - Justin Martyr – b. 100 A.D. in Samaria, early Apologist.
 - Irenaeus – c. 130-202 A.D. bishop in what became Lyons, France
 - Tertullian – c. 155-220 A.D. bishop in Carthage, N. Africa
 - Origen – c.184-253 A.D. catechist in Alexandria and Caesarea
- Council of Nicaea – 325 A.D. set the rule for Christological controversies
- From Nicaea to Constantinople
 - “Pneumatomachians” (“Spirit-fighters”) - accepted the divinity of the Son but not the Spirit.
 - Athanasius – c. 296/8 to 373 A.D., deacon and theological consultant to bishop of Alexandria at Nicaea; became bishop himself and wrote several influential treatises on both christology and pneumatology
 - Didymus the Blind – c. 313 to 398 A.D., student of Origen and theologian at Alexandria. Wrote a treatise *On the Holy Spirit*
 - The Cappadocians – i.e. from the region of Cappadocia in what is now Turkey. Were the major figures responsible for the pneumatology set in the Council of Constantinople
 - Basil the Great – c. 330 to 379 A.D., became bishop of Caesarea, wrote influential treatise, *On the Holy Spirit*
 - Gregory of Nyssa – c. 335 to 395 A.D., brother of Basil, became bishop of Nyssa
 - Gregory Nazianzen – c.329 to 390 A.D., archbishop of Constantinople and presiding authority at the Council
- Council of Constantinople – 381 A.D. set the rule for pneumatology
- Augustine – c.354-430 A.D. – became bishop of Hippo in N. Africa and the most influential “Western” theologian. Luther was an Augustinian monk and he and the Confessions appeal to Augustine more than any other theologian.

PRAYER: Let us contemplate the Mystery...

God in Himself (Immanent Trinity) and God in Relation to Us (Economic Trinity)

- Three reasons to distinguish the Immanent:
 - God’s Aseity – he is himself apart from us
 - We glorify him even apart from what he does for us
 - We ultimately participate in God’s life – so understand that life in itself!
- Yet we have no access to the immanent trinity except through the economic Trinity.
 - 1) God is hidden and unknown until he acts, including by revealing himself.
 - 2) Scripture focuses on the economic
- Still, some mention of the immanent in revelation; and, see the immanent in the economic.

The Nicene Creed: “And in the Holy Spirit...who proceeds from the Father [and the Son]”

John 15:26 ²⁶ But when the Advocate comes, whom I will send to you from the Father, the Spirit of truth, *who proceeds from the Father*, he will bear witness about me.”

- “Procession”: the Spirit “comes from” the Father. Common starting point at least by Athanasius.
- Note well: the Spirit’s “procession” is NOT the same as the Father’s “begetting” of the Son.

Controversy: the “Filioque” = “and the Son” (i.e. the Spirit ALSO proceeds from the Son)

The so-called “double” procession implied in the Filioque is one of the primary issues cited in the “Great Schism” of 1054, when the Pope in Rome and Patriarch in Constantinople mutually excommunicated each other, splitting the “Western, Catholic” Church from the “Eastern, Orthodox” Church.

- *An ecclesiological problem:* the Filioque is NOT original to the Creed as developed at Nicaea; it was added later, probably in the 6th century, by Western Churches without conciliar agreement. So can one part of the charge just dictate to another?
- *An exegetical problem connected to wording:* Scripture never uses “proceeds” of the Spirit in relation to the Son, only the Father.
- *An ontological problem (about God’s “being”):* the Unity of the One God
 - Gregory Nazianzen, Orat. 42, 15 (PG36, 476B) – “Nature is one in the Three; it is God. What makes *their unity*, however, is the Father, on whom the others depend, not in order to be confused or mixed, but *in order to be united.*”

Basic Theological Ground

- Just as Scripture says the Holy Spirit is “the Spirit of the Father,” so too it says he is the “Spirit of the Son” (Gal 4:6; Jn 20:22; Lk 6:19)
- John 14:26: [Jesus], “the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in my name” (Jn 14:26)
- John 16:14-15: “14 He will glorify me because it is from me that he will receive what he will make known to you. 15 All that belongs to the Father is mine. That is why I said the Spirit will receive from me what he will make known to you.”

And yet: Augustine on the Priority of the Father in the Spirit’s Procession:

- “By saying then, *Whom I will send you from the Father* (Jn 15:26), the Lord showed that the Spirit is both the Father’s and the Son’s. Elsewhere too, when he said, *whom the Father will send,*” he added, *“in my name* (Jn 14:26). He did not however say, “whom the Father will send from me” as he said *whom I will send you from the Father* (Jn 15:26), and thereby he indicated that the source of all godhead, or if you prefer it, of all deity, is the Father. So the Spirit who proceeds from the Father and the Son is traced back, on both accounts, to him of whom the Son is born.” [*De Trinitate* 4.20.29; the Spirit is originally “from” the Father in a way he is not “from” the Son.]
- “[T]he Holy Spirit owes his existence to the Father, from whom everything comes lest we should find ourselves postulating two principles of origin without an origin, an assertion that would be totally false, utterly absurd, and contrary to the Catholic faith.” [*De Trin* 4.20.29; here Augustine shares Nazianzen’s concern that Father’s origination of both is the ground of unity]
- “Principally” from the Father: “And yet it is not without point that in this triad only the Son is called the Word of God, and only the Holy Spirit is called the gift of God, and only the Father is called the one from whom the Word is born and from whom the Holy Spirit principally proceeds, I added “principally,” because we have found that the Holy Spirit also proceeds from the Son. But this too was given the Son by the Father—not given to him when he already existed and did not yet have it, but whatever the Father gave to his only-begotten Word he gave by begetting him” [*De Trin* 15.17.29]

A Suggestive Alternative/Modification to “Double” Procession?

- Gregory of Nyssa: “The Son who makes known the Spirit who issues from the Father (Jn 15.26) through himself and with himself, and who alone shines forth as the only begotten from the unbegotten light. (*EpPet. 4e*). Shorthand: the Spirit proceeds FROM the Father THROUGH the Son. [Link to “Principally”]

The Rest of the Story

- The Council of Basel (1431)- Ferrera (1438) – Florence / Lateran (1439-45): "the Latin Church recognizes but one principle, one cause of the Holy Spirit, namely, the Father. It is from the Father that the Son holds his place in the 'Procession' of the Holy Ghost. It is in this sense that the Holy Ghost proceeds from the Father, but He proceeds also from the Son." ([link](#)) Ostensibly accepted by the East with various reunions with Eastern Church bodies but ultimately came to naught for many reasons.
- 1964-5: Pope Paul VI and Patriarch Athenagoras I meet in Jerusalem and then lift the excommunications. But still not full unity, and filioque still contested.

Father, Son, and Spirit's Actions toward Each Other in Creating and Redeeming Us – and "Before" / Apart From Us as Immanent Trinity?

Son as Speech, Spirit as Enacting God's Will in Christ "On the Ground" and "In Us"

John 1:1-3, 14, 17 "1 In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. 2 He was in the beginning with God. 3 All things were made through him, and without him was not any thing made that was made...The Word became flesh and made his dwelling among us...from Him we have all received, grace upon grace." [Jesus is the Speech through which both creation and redemption happen]

Genesis 1:1-3: "In the beginning, God created the heavens and the earth. 2 The earth was without form and void, and darkness was over the face of the deep. And *the Spirit of God* was hovering over the face of the waters. 3 And God *said*..." [Spirit is God's action at the most direct point of interface with creation.]

John 14:6a, 16:13: "[Jesus said,] I am the Way, the Truth, and the Life...when he, the Spirit of truth, comes, he will guide you into all the truth."

Formula of Concord (1577) – Article II, "On Free Will," #26: "He is a Spirit of regeneration and renewal, Titus 3:5 ["he saved us, not because of works done by us in righteousness, but according to his own mercy, by the washing of regeneration and renewal of the Holy Spirit"]... 'No one can call Christ Lord except by the Holy Spirit' (1 Cor 12:3)." [The Spirit implements the truth and redemption of Jesus IN US.]

Spirit as Speaker and Testifier

John 14:16-17 "And I will ask the Father, and he will give you another Advocate, to be with you forever, even the Spirit of truth..."

John 15:26, 16:8-11: "When the Advocate comes, whom I will send to you from the Father—the Spirit of truth who goes out from the Father—he will testify about me...8 When he comes, he will prove the world to be in the wrong about sin and righteousness and judgment: 9 about sin, because people do not believe in me; 10 about righteousness, because I am going to the Father, where you can see me no longer; 11 and about judgment, because the prince of this world now stands condemned.

John's Writings – Double "Trial Motif"

- The Pharisees "test" Jesus (John 8:1-30) and ultimately both Jews and Romans literally bring him into court (John 18-19). At the same time, in other passages, God puts the world on trial – ultimately, the judgment will only be passed at the end of time (John 5), but as in the passage above and in John 3:18, not believing in the Son already effectively places one under condemnation.
- Throughout his Gospel and Epistles, John repeatedly refers to Father, Son and especially the Spirit as "witnesses" testifying at once in both trials (cf. John 3:11, 8:14 – Son; John 5:37 – Father; John 15:26 – Spirit; all three together, 1 John 5:6-12).

- “Advocate” (Paraclete) – a term for one who is a *legal* assistant – part of the Trial language, in addition to the “comfort” aspect. Note also that in John 14:16, Jesus speaks of the Spirit as ANOTHER Paraclete – implying that he is the first.
- A “chain” of testimony and advocacy: the Father testifies (John 5:37), which becomes the Son’s testimony (John 8:14) as first paraclete, and then the Spirit’s testimony as “another” paraclete (John 14-16). That is, as Jesus says more generally, the Spirit takes from what is his, which in turn has been given him by the Father (John 16:12-15)

Conversation Partners with Each Other, “First”

Psalm 110:1: “The Lord said to my Lord, ‘sit my right hand until I make your enemies a footstool at your feet.’”

- Jesus himself (Mt 22:41-6, Lk 20:41-44), as well as Peter on Pentecost (Acts 2:34-5), apply the first “Lord” to the Father and the second to the Son.
- In fact, this was a primary passage that helped the earliest theologians see and think about the Father, Son, and Spirit as distinct persons – see Justin Martyr, *Dialogue* 56.14 (160 A.D.), Irenaeus, *Against Heresies* 3.6.1 (185 A.D.), Tertullian, *Against Praxeas* 11.7-8 (210 A.D.).

Gen 1:26: “Let us make man in our image...”

John 1:1-2: **1** In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. **2** He was in the beginning with God.

- Economic/immanent pivot: the conversation BEFORE creation?

Glorifying Each Other, Sharing One Glorious Being

- John 16:14-15: “[The Spirit] will glorify me, for he will take what is mine and declare it to you. **15** All that the Father has is mine; therefore I said that he will take what is mine and declare it to you...”
- Hebrews 1:1-3: “Long ago, at many times and in many ways, God spoke to our fathers by the prophets, **2** but in these last days he has spoken to us by his Son, whom he appointed the heir of all things, through whom also he created the world. **3** He is the radiance of the glory of God and the exact imprint of his nature, and he upholds the universe by the word of his power.”
 - The Son through whom all things were created, who was therefore “before” creation as Eternal Son, is the “radiance” of the glory of God. Does this refer to the Father’s sharing of being with the Son as also a “radiation” of his glory? And would not this glory also then be something that “proceeds” to the Spirit from the Father through the Son?
 - The economic ACTION extends and reflects the original “eternal motion” that constitutes the very dynamic be-ing of the Trinity.

Spirit as Truth and “Knower” of the Father in the Son

John 14:16-17 “And I will ask the Father, and he will give you another Advocate, to be with you forever, even the Spirit of truth...”

John 15:26, 16:8-11: “When the Advocate comes, whom I will send to you from the Father—the Spirit of truth who goes out from the Father.”

1 Cor 2:10b-11: “For the Spirit searches everything, even the depths of God. **11** For who knows a person's thoughts except the spirit of that person, which is in him? So also no one comprehends the thoughts of God except the Spirit of God.”

Economic/Immanent Crossover?

- “Spirit of Truth” – a constant identity? Didymus the Blind: “since the Spirit of Wisdom and Truth is inseparable from the Son [who is wisdom and Truth], he too is Wisdom and Truth.” *On the Holy Spirit*, 94. Seems to trace it to the Son and Spirit’s “inseparable” sharing of BEING and not just ACTION.
- John 15:26 – “the Spirit of Truth *who goes out from the Father*” – is that the economic sending or the immanent procession? Or, “yes”?
- 1 Cor 2 – “the Spirit knows the thoughts of God” – is that (just) an economic activity or his eternal/immanent operation?
 - Connected with John 1 – Jesus is the Logos (Word as speech but also thought in the mind). Put together with 1 Cor 2 and similar passages, is the suggestion that the Father eternally “thinks/speaks” the Son as Eternal Logos. “Reflecting” on the Son, the Spirit makes known the Father to himself through the Son.
 - Connected with Hebrews 1 – the Father is Light, the Son is Radiance, and the Spirit is the means by which we are enlightened (Athanasius, *Epistles to Serapion* 1.19.4). Likewise, connecting with the image language of Hebrews and in parallel to the logic of the later idea of the Spirit proceeding from the Father through the Son, Athanasius will regard the Spirit as the Image of the Son, just as the Son is image of the Father (*Ep. Serap.* 1.20.4).

Spirit as Sent, Gift, and Spiration (Breath)

- De Trin 15.26.45: “of whom likewise the Son Himself says, “Whom I will send unto you from the Father” [Jn 15:26] and in another place, “Whom the Father will send in my name” [Jn 14:26]. And we are so taught that He proceeds from both, because the Son Himself says, He proceeds from the Father [Jn 15:26]. And when He had risen from the dead, and had appeared to His disciples, “He breathed upon them, and said, Receive the Holy Spirit” [Jn 20:22], so as to show that He proceeded also from Himself.”
 - Proceeding becomes sending becomes breathing – all one motion, extended
- De Trin 5.11.12: “or He is the gift of the Father and of the Son, because “He proceeds from the Father,” as the Lord says; and because that which the apostle says, “Now, if any man have not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of His,” he says certainly of the Holy Spirit Himself.” [Aug also often refers to Acts 8:19-20: “¹⁹ [Simon the sorcerer said,] “Give me this power also, so that anyone on whom I lay my hands may receive the Holy Spirit.” ²⁰ But Peter said to him, “May your silver perish with you, because you thought you could obtain the gift of God with money!”]
 - Similarly, proceeding becomes gifting. But how exactly is the immanent/eternal procession so linked to the temporal/economic gifting? De Trin 5.15.16: “Does the Holy Spirit proceed always, and proceed not in time, but from eternity, but because He so proceeded that He was capable of being given, was already a gift even before there was one to whom He might be given?” [What God does “in time” was already eternally present in the mind and action of God...God had already determined himself as Spirit to be Gift.]
- De Trin 4.20.29: “As for the Son to be born is to be from the Father, so for the Son to be sent is to be known in his origin from the Father. In the same way, as for the Holy Spirit to be the gift of God is to proceed from the Father, so to be sent is to be known in his procession from the Father. What is more, we cannot deny that the Spirit also proceeds from the Son...I cannot see what he could otherwise have meant when, breathing on the faces of the disciples, the Lord declared: ‘Receive the Holy Spirit’ (Jn 20:20).”
- What we “know” as sending of Son or Spirit is simply the further temporal/economic extension of what it means for the Father to “beget” the Son and the Spirit to “proceed” from the Father. And for the Spirit to be both gift and breath is in turn just another side of the procession as sending.

The Holy Spirit and/as Love

Augustine *De Trin* 15.17.27: “And the Holy Spirit, according to the Holy Scriptures, is neither of the Father alone, nor of the Son alone, but of both; and so intimates to us a mutual love, wherewith the Father and the Son reciprocally love one another”

- A Force rather than a person? (“Similitudo”)
- 1 John 4:16 – “God is Love.” – Augustine, *De Trin* 15.17.29: true of God as a whole and of each of the three as God. So why distinguish Spirit as love?
 - Certain terms, though true of all three, are especially appropriated by Scripture to one: “As, then, we call the only Word of God specially by the name of Wisdom, although universally both the Holy Spirit and the Father Himself is wisdom; so the Holy Spirit is specially called by the name of Love, although universally both the Father and the Son are love.” Aug, *De Trin* 15.17.31
 - The Spirit presented as the bond
 - Aug, *De Trin* 15.17.29 (glancing) – “The Spirit [is] the Spirit of both”
 - Bonaventure (1221-1274), *In I Sent.* i d.13, a unic. 1.4, d.10, a.2, q.2: “The Love that the Holy Spirit is does not proceed from the Father insofar as he loves himself, nor does he proceed from the Son insofar as he loves himself, but he proceeds insofar as the one loves the other, because he is a *nexus* (a bond or link).”
 - Aug’s main answer, *De Trin* 15.17.31: “But where the Holy Spirit is called Love, is to be found by careful scrutiny of the language of John the apostle, who, after saying, “Beloved, let us love one another, for love is of God,” has gone on to say, “And every one that loves is born of God, and knows God. He that loves not, knows not God; for God is love”...when, in what follows, the apostle had mentioned the love of God...and thereupon had exhorted us also to love one another, so that God would abide in us [since] he had called God Love; immediately, in his wish to speak yet more expressly on the subject...he says, “know we that we dwell in Him, and He in us, because He has given us of His Spirit.” Therefore the Holy Spirit, of whom He has given us, makes us to abide in God, and Him in us; and this it is that love does. Therefore He is the God that is love.” [Spirit is love “economically” toward us – parlays into immanently in God.
- Some: better to call the Spirit the AGENT of the bond between Father and Son.
- From the contemporary East, Paul Evdokimov offers a version that seems to tack between both: “[the Holy Spirit] is in the middle of the Father and the Son. He is the one who *brings about* the communion between the Father and the Son. He is the one who *brings about* the communion between the two. He *is* the communion, the love between the Father and the Son. That is shown by the remarkable fact that the movement comes from him. It is in his breath that the Father moves into the Son, that the Son receives his Father and that the Word resounds” (“L’icône,” *La Vie Spirituelle* 82 [1956], 36).

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