

The Holy Spirit - Part 3

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[0:00] All right, we are back with the doctrine of the Holy Spirit. Welcome back. Did anyone show? Did anyone show up last week thinking we had class? No, you all got the memo. Great, good, good, good, good. So let me just say briefly, by way of review, really briefly, we've said that the study of the Holy Spirit typically falls into two parts, right? We're looking at the person of the Holy Spirit and the work of the Holy Spirit. And the first two weeks of our class, we spent looking at the person of the Holy Spirit first in the Old Testament and then in the New Testament.

And the conclusion that we came to after studying the biblical text was that the Holy Spirit is a distinct divine person along with the Father and the Son in the unity of the one triune God.

Now today, we are going to look at how the doctrine of the person of the Holy Spirit developed in church history, at least over the first thousand years of church history.

And this week's going to be somewhat of a bridge to the second half of our class, or really the second two-thirds of our class, where we're going to talk about the work of the Holy Spirit, because we'll see that as the doctrine of the Holy Spirit begins to develop throughout church history, it really goes from his person and then into his work. Now, we might kind of briefly ask, why study the historical development of these doctrines at all? Why bother, right? Why not just study the Bible and leave it at that? Well, I think there are a number of things we could say to that kind of question, but I think perhaps the most straightforward answer is that studying church history helps us to understand the Bible better. It helps us to live out the vision of biblical faithfulness with more wisdom. Studying church history is an acknowledgement that we need other Christians. We need each other in the church in order to grasp all that God is saying to us in his word, right? It's prideful to think that we don't need the wisdom of previous generations of

Christians who've prayerfully studied God's word and who can help us understand it today. Do you remember the verse in Ephesians chapter 4 verse 11, where it says that our risen and ascended Lord Jesus gives to the church what? Well, one of the things he lists there is teachers, right?

Teachers. Apostles and prophets, shepherds and teachers. Why? So that we might not be tossed to and fro by the wind of every false doctrine or human cunning, but so that we might grow into maturity in Christ. So we look to church history. When we do that, we're looking to the gifts that Christ gave the church, these teachers who can help us understand his word and his ways with more clarity and wisdom.

[2:49] Okay, how are we going to approach the history of the doctrine of the Holy Spirit? Of course, given that we're only spending one class on the entire history of the development of the Holy Spirit, which is ridiculous, we're obviously going to do it at a very high level, right? We're just going to hit some of the overviews. And I had great ambitions today of breaking up church history into four quadrants and talking about the key doctrines in each one. And then as I was preparing my notes, I realized I hit the time limit and I only covered like the first one and a half. So we're not even going to do some of the later stuff today, but we are going to pick those up in coming classes.

Because what happens in, you know, after the first about a thousand years of church history, the person of the Holy Spirit really gets solidified. There'll be other kind of things that crop up along the way, but the church's understanding of scripture of the person of the Holy Spirit is really solidified in those first thousand years. And then the issues that kind of come up in the Reformation and post-Reformation, the issues that come up in the modern age of the church, are really more about the work of the Holy Spirit. And we're going to deal with those as we come to those topics as we go. So we are painting with very broad strokes today. I don't want you to come away from this class thinking that we've hit every little detail, you know, but I still think this is going to be helpful, you know, as we think about the Holy Spirit, you know, if you think about like, if you need to find a restaurant downtown, right, like a street map is really helpful, right? But, you know, if you need to

figure out the relationship of like where New Haven is located in relationship to like London or Dubai or Tokyo, right, you need a higher level map, don't you? So this is going to be that higher level map so that we can see sort of the big picture. So, okay, well, let's just jump right in then. We're looking at the development of the doctrine of the Holy Spirit in the early church and really the early kind of middle ages. Now, what do I mean by early church? The early church, roughly, you know, Jesus ascended around 30 AD, right? And then there was the apostolic age. So we think about the early church roughly, let's just say 100, right? Sort of the age after the apostles, right? Into up to about 500. And then we think about the middle ages. I mean, sometimes all the way up to the Reformation to 1500, but we're going to stop at 1054, which if you know the date 1054, you know, there's something a little ominous about that date, but we'll get to that at the end. So this is the time period we're looking at. What was the, when it came to the Holy Spirit, what was the church kind of really hammering out, defending, thinking through, clarifying in this time? Well, the main issues in this period of church history were two. The first was the deity of the Holy Spirit.

In other words, is the Holy Spirit fully God? And the second question they wrestled with in relation to that was what we might call the procession of the Holy Spirit. Or in other words, what is the relationship between the Father, Son, and Spirit? If the Holy Spirit is fully God, what is his relationship to the other two persons of the Trinity? So the deity of the Holy Spirit and the procession of the Holy Spirit. But what's some of the background to some of these debates that we're going to look at? Well, start reading the book of Acts, right? We've been looking at the book of Acts on Sunday mornings. Empowered by the Spirit, the church begins to multiply and spread throughout the known world, right? And we're going to look at a lot of theologians, what we might say in the West, but the church is spreading all over, right? It's going east, it's going south, it's going north, right? And as the mission of the church advanced, the church began in that time to articulate on the basis of Scripture, the deity of the Holy Spirit with more and more precision. Now, why did they have to do that? Why did they have to do that? Because a number of movements started to crop up in the history of the early church that sort of challenged what we might call the traditional or the orthodox, or we could even say the biblical view of the Holy Spirit. So we're going to look at some of those.

The first one is this. In the late first century, sorry, late second century, early third century, there was a movement, and you're going to get a lot of cool terms this morning. Are you ready for that? You're going to learn a lot of cool terms. Monarchianism was the first one, okay? What is monarchianism? Monarchianism emphasized the unity of God, right? This comes from the word monarchia, which means ruler, right? There's just one monarch, one monarchia in the universe, one principle, one ruler. So it really emphasized the oneness of God, right? And if that idea of God is one, if that's foremost in your thinking about the Godhead, then the deity of the Son and the deity of the Holy Spirit become sort of problematic, right? And if God the Father is God and Jesus the Son is God, then it appears there's two gods, right? Because there's only one God, but that means you have two. And on top of that, if the Holy Spirit is God, well, then it looks like we're believing in three gods. So this is what the monarchianism was trying to address by claiming the sort of absolute numerical oneness of God and the sole deity of God the Father. Now, there were actually two kinds of this that cropped up.

[8:08] The one that cropped up, as far as I can tell, actually a little later, but it was sort of less influential, was called dynamic monarchianism. And this was championed by a guy named Paul of Samosata, who was a bishop in Antioch kind of in the late third century. He was bishop from like 260 to 268, somewhere in there. Now, Paul, unfortunately, had a lot of really, really unbiblical views, even though he was a bishop. So, you know, just because someone holds a title in the church doesn't mean that they hold to the apostolic teaching, right? So on the one hand, he claimed that Jesus was just sort of a normal human being who, probably around the time of his baptism, was sort of filled with divine power and adopted at that point as the Son of God, right? This is sometimes called adoptionism, right? That Jesus wasn't fully God, but sort of became a kind of super divine human at some point in his earthly life. Along with that, the dynamic monarchianism held that the Holy Spirit wasn't much more than just a kind of divine influence, right? Now, we talked about this view in our last couple of classes, so we're not going to spend a lot of time on this. And honestly, people in the church read their Bibles, they heard what the apostles had taught, and continue to teach.

They're like, that is not Christianity. So that didn't hold a lot of influence, thankfully. The second form of monarchianism did, actually. And this second form was called, whoops, I'll put it right over here. Okay, modalistic monarchianism. This one, that was gone.

Modalistic monarchianism. Sometimes this is just called modalism. So what was this idea? So a couple of the teachers in the church that developed this was a guy named Praxeus in Rome. There was another guy named Zephyrinus in Callistus. They had awesome names in the early church, by the way. We are not good at naming people anymore. Zephyrinus, that's a sweet name. But it was really popularized by a guy named Sibelius. And in fact, sometimes, I'm even going to make this on its own thing. Sometimes you'll hear this view just referred to as modalism, or you might even see it referred to as Sibelianism, right? You know you're a really bad teacher in the church when a whole heresy gets named after you, right? So Sibelius. Now, before we laugh too hard at modalism, modalistic monarchianism, what did it teach, right? What was it all about? So modalistic monarchianism held that there's one God, right? But that one God can be designated by three different names, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit at different times. The three are not distinct persons. Instead, they're different modes of the one God. Hence the name modalism, or modalistic monarchianism, right?

[11:16] Monarchianism, God is one. Modalism, he can kind of put on different masks or use different names at different times, right? The way Sibelius kind of cashed this out was progressive in history, right?

In the Old Testament, God showed himself as Father, creator of the world, lawgiver. Then in the Gospels, the same God showed up as Son, incarnate in Jesus Christ. But now we can call that same God Holy Spirit as he's at work in the church, in the church age, right? So you see what the modalists are saying here is they're saying that Jesus Christ is God and the Spirit is God, but they're not distinct persons.

They're just names. They're just modes. They're just masks of the one God. Now, how do you think the church responded to that? Do you see the problem it's trying to solve? One God, three persons, three things that are called God, how do we resolve that apparent tension in Scripture? How do you think the church responded to the modalist monarchianism? Yeah, Richard, go ahead.

With a question. Yeah, go ahead. Yeah. And the question is, who did Jesus pray to? Exactly. Exactly. Who was Jesus praying to? He was praying to the Father. So look at Jesus in the Garden of Gethsemane, praying to his Father, pleading with his Father. What other passages do you think the church appealed to?

I think about the Father, that's a big, because I think all Jesus always talks about a Father. He has such a devotion. He is showing what devotion is.

[12:57] Yep. Everything following the Father. So the Father is a crown. Yeah. So it's, there were so many passages, right, where the Son, Jesus' relationship with the Father was so clear, that we see that those were too distinct. Any others you can think of were the spirits at play? Yeah, Tyler, and then we'll go to Jeff.

In Genesis, let us make it in our image. Oh, that's a very interesting passage, isn't it? Yeah. Plurality is the line of God. Yeah, there's something going on there. And very interestingly, in Genesis 1, there's a lot of ink that's been spilled about what that plural means there.

But earlier in Genesis, who might God be referring to? Well, the only other sort of divine figure in the Genesis 1 narrative is the Spirit of God, right? So if you're just reading Genesis 1, it would think that God and the Spirit of God are having this interaction. Interesting, right?

Interesting hint. Yeah, Jeff? That's right. Yep. Oh. And remember what happens at the baptism as well. What else happens at the baptism?

The Spirit comes down. So the church opens up their scriptures at this point, because we're talking third century, right? They read the account of the baptism and they think, well, here is the Son, here is the Father, and here is the Spirit. It's not as, I mean, that's a lot of quick mask changes in one scene, right? Like, imagine one actor playing that scene, right?

[14:24] Like the modalists were claiming, right? But you can't, right? You can't have the Son being baptized, the Spirit coming down, and the Father speaking all at the same moment, right? So these were some of the passages that the church referred to to say, no, no, no, no, no, this apparent solution to the mystery of the Trinity falls woefully short. So the church began to affirm, continue to affirm on the basis of Scripture, that the Father, Son, and Spirit aren't just different masks, different prosopa, different faces of God, but different persona, different persons of God,

right? Now we can get into what the Latin term person means. It's not quite the same as our today, but it's distinct. So Tertullian, oh yeah, Jeff, go ahead.

Was this before the Nicene Creed? It was, yes. This was all happening before the Nicene Creed. That's right, yes, yes. This is before then. Yep, this is going to be before then. So, so one of the writers, so Sibelius's dates were like 215. So Sibelius was like circa 215, right? Remember Nicaea is 325 and Constantinople is 381, which we'll get to that in a second, right?

So this is almost 100 years before the Council of Nicaea. Tertullian, who was a church father in North Africa, who died around, let me just, 220 AD.

He writes this in response to all of this. Remember, wanting to say from Scripture that they're distinct persons. Tertullian writes, There is the paraclete, or the comforter, for whom the Lord promises to pray to the Father to send from heaven after he had ascended to the Father.

He is called another comforter indeed. John 14, 16. See there? Tertullian points right to the Gospel of John and says, how do you explain that, modalists? You can't. He shall receive of mine, says Christ.

[16 : 21] John 16, 14. Just as Christ received, himself received, of the fathers. Thus, the connection of the Father and the Son, and of the Son, and the paraclete, that's the word for spirit.

Well, it's the word for comforter, but it's referring to the Holy Spirit, right? The connection of the Father and the Son, and of the Son and the paraclete, produces three coherent persons, Tertullian writes, who are yet distinct from one another.

These three, here's the payoff, are one essence, not one person. So, in the early third century, Tertullian, finding language to try to explain what Scripture teaches, lands on wording that will help the church pretty much for the rest of its history, that God is one in essence, and yet three in persons.

Thus, the Holy Spirit is fully God, just as the Father and Son are, yet he's distinct from these two, just as the Father and Son are. This kind of modalistic monarchianism, right, emphasized the oneness of the Godhead, but it didn't do justice to the distinction in persons, and for that reason, the church considered it wrong.

Okay. Flash forward a couple years, a hundred years, right, and a new kind of teaching arises. So, we had monarchianism, now Arianism. Now, maybe you've heard of this before, Arianism.

[17 : 43] So, a teacher named Arius started teaching, again, emphasizing the oneness of God, started denying the deity of Jesus Christ, right, arguing that the Son was a created being, albeit the Son was the greatest, the highest, the most magnificent being that ever was, but still a created being, right?

And Arius even wrote good songs, right? He wrote a song that said, there is a time when the Son was not, right? So, beware the worship songs you listen to. No, I'm kidding. I'm joking.

I'm joking. So, we're not, this isn't a class about the person of the Son, about the person of Christ, about Christology, so we'll move quickly, but in the Council of Nicaea, the Council of Nicaea in 325, in 325, sort of roundly rejected Arianism.

It was a big debate. It was fierce, and Arianism continued to have influence after the Council of Nicaea, but at the Council of Nicaea, the church confessed that Jesus Christ, the Son of God, was, here's a good word, told you we were going to learn a lot of good words today, homoousios, with the Father, the same being, the same essence, as the Father.

Arius wanted to say this, that Jesus was homoousios. One little iota in there, is what Arius wanted to put in, which means of really, really similar nature.

[19 : 21] Exactly, and these were the kind of passages that the church would continue to appeal to, to say, nope, Jesus is of the same substance, the same being, as the Father.

After the Council of Nicaea, now, oh, this is really important. At the Council of Nicaea, the main debate was about the person of the Son. So, the first iteration, the first sort of copy of the Nicene Creed, after it had that wonderful paragraph about the person of the Son, just said, and we believe in the Holy Spirit.

Done. Now, of course, in saying, and we believe in the Holy Spirit, it was gesturing towards all that the church had been teaching for now hundreds of years about the Holy Spirit. But it, but it left this door open, right?

So, as you can guess, after the Council of Nicaea, debate about the Holy Spirit continued to break out. And many emphasized with Arius, because Arius also, obviously, if Arius didn't think the Son

was fully God, he certainly didn't think the Spirit was fully God, right?

So, many of Arius' sort of, you know, remnant followers, who were still pretty influential, began taking up this teaching. And the response to those challenges took place over many, many years, over the next 70 years, actually.

[20:36] And, now, we talked a lot about the deity of the Spirit at our last, at our last class, but here's a sample of how the church took up that task. And there were a number of, of church theologians, pastors, who, who were working hard to sort of defend the deity of the Spirit.

The first was a guy named Cyril of Jerusalem, who was, he died in 386. So, he was only about 12 when the Council of Nicaea was ratified.

But he lived throughout the 4th century. And he argued that the Spirit is fully God, right? And, interesting, there's a lot we could say about Cyril, but, but he, I love seeing how the church fathers reasoned from Scripture, right?

And the insights that they have, right? Because, now remember, Arius was saying, and the followers of Arius after his death were saying the Holy Spirit wasn't fully God, right? That the Holy Spirit was a great created being, right?

But not, not homo usios with the Father. Listen to what Cyril writes. He says, he says of the Holy Spirit, now listen, the Holy Spirit, nothing among created things, among created things, is equal in honor to him.

[21:46] For the families of angels and all their hosts assembled together have no equality with the Holy Spirit. the all-excellent power of the Comforter, picking up Jesus' language in John 14, 15, and 16, overshadows all of these, right?

So the Arians wanted to say, the Holy Spirit's this great exalted being, just like all the angels, right? And Cyril says, no, no, no, no, the Spirit is above them all, right? And here's how he reasons from Scripture.

Hebrews 1, 14 says, the angels are sent forth to serve, right? But what does the Bible say about the Holy Spirit? In 1 Corinthians 2, 10 through 11, right?

It says, the Spirit searches everything, even the deep things of God. 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.

So Cyril looks at a passage like that and he's saying, you're telling me the Spirit of God is some angel who's sent forth to serve for the sake of those who are to inherit salvation? No, it can't be. Some of you may be familiar with the name Athanasius who was very active during the Council of Nicaea and especially the years after the Council of Nicaea.

[22:58] Tyler, how many times was Athanasius like banished from his post in his battle with the Arians and the post-Arians? Seven or eight times. Six or seven times. You know, seven or eight times. Like, he was always fighting, right?

In fact, there's this phrase, Athanasius, Athanasius contra mundi, right? Athanasius against the world. standing up for the Orthodox faith. And Athanasius also had to do some articulation of the doctrine of the Holy Spirit because, again, that was part of this fray that was happening in the fourth century.

Now, again, there's a lot we could say about Athanasius' approach to this. He talks about those moments in Scripture where we see the three names lined up together.

He talks about the triad, right? You think about the baptism in the name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit, right? And he says, look, the Holy Spirit belongs to the triad. If the triad is God, the Holy Spirit is God.

Simple logic here, guys, right? But I found this passage really interesting in Athanasius. And this is very telling of Athanasius' spirituality and its theological reasoning.

[24:03] So he picks up on a verse from 2 Peter 1.4 where Peter says that through the gospel we become partakers of the divine nature. And Athanasius writes this.

He says, if the Holy Spirit were a creature, then we would have no participation in God through him, right? But if the Holy Spirit makes men divine, right?

Oh, sorry. I skipped a line. He says, if the Holy Spirit were a creature, we would have no participation in God through him. We would be united to a creature and separated from the divine nature, right? Ah, but if the Spirit makes men divine, his nature must undoubtedly be that of God, right?

In other words, what Athanasius is saying is that, look, it's scripture. The Holy Spirit does what only God can do, right? if the Holy Spirit comes and continues to fashion us into the divine image, right? So that we become partakers of the divine nature, not becoming God, but becoming more the image bearers he created us to be, then he must be God if that is his ministry, right? So at the Council of Alexandria in 362, at the urging of Athanasius, the church made this statement.

[25 : 20] It wasn't a creedal statement, but it was one of the statements that they kind of rolled out in this council. It said, we believe there's one Godhead, that it has one nature, that's the *ousios*, not that there is one nature of the Father from which that of the Son and the Spirit are distinct, right?

They're saying, no, no, no, no, the Son and the Spirit aren't distinct from the nature of the Father. In other words, they were saying that the Spirit is *homo ousios*, just as the Son is. But the fight kind of raged on.

And this is my favorite name that we're going to talk about this morning. So, in the later part of the 4th century, there was a group called the Macedonians, but they came to be called the Pneumatomachians.

The Pneumatomachians, the Spirit Fighters. Not that they were fighting for the Spirit, but against Him. Obviously, this was the name that their opponents gave to them, right?

They were called Macedonians at first because, again, an errant bishop, a kind of, you know, semi-Arian bishop named Macedonius of Constantinople taught the view that, again, just denied the full divinity of the Spirit.

[26 : 45] And that teaching from a bishop, no less, and he was sort of bishop from 350 to 360 in Constantinople, gave rise to this sect who denied the deity of the Spirit.

And they wanted to be a little subtle. Sorry, this is a whole other view here. They wanted to be a little subtle and say, whoa, look, the Spirit's not a created thing, but the Spirit's not fully God, right? Against the Pneumatomachians, the sort of greatest flowering of theology about the person of the Holy Spirit took place.

Three church leaders took up the defense of the Orthodox doctrine of the Holy Spirit. Gregory of Nyssa, Gregory of Nazianzus, what a great name, right?

That's a mouthful. And Basil the Great. You know, Basil the Great.

Wouldn't that be wonderful if that's how the church remembers you, right? And you've got to think of the other guys. Gregory and the two Gregories were like, why didn't we get the great? You know, he got the great. No, but what a wonderful picture just as a sidebar of brotherly collegiality in the church to together uphold the truth of Scripture.

[28 : 15] These three became known as the Cappadocian Fathers because they were from a region in Asia Minor called Cappadocia, which today is, today is, in Turkey, it's sort of like this southeastern section is where Cappadocia was.

And in countering the error of the Pneumatomachians, the fighters against the Spirit, the Cappadocian Fathers, as I said, they set forth kind of the definitive theology of the Holy Spirit that would help and assist the church to understand Scripture and understand the Spirit pretty much since then.

Greg, we won't get into all of their arguments because honestly, we talked about a lot of their arguments at our last meeting that they would take up Scripture and say, look at this and look at this and look at this and then they would reason from Scripture to the full deity of the Holy Spirit.

Right? But as they did this and soundly began to defend the deity of the Holy Spirit, it raised an interesting question. If the Holy Spirit is *homoousios*, of one essence with a divine nature, right? Sometimes you'll see the Latin word *consubstantial*. It means the same thing, right? If that is true of the Holy Spirit and of the Son, how do we distinguish between the Spirit and the Son?

[29 : 34] Could we not conclude that the Father has two sons, right? If they both are *homoousios* with the Father? I'm turning this around because we're going to need more space. How do we talk about the Father, Son, and Spirit in a way that doesn't just sort of evolve out into confusion and nonsense, right?

Because in that confusion was where the false teaching started to creep in. So in order to differentiate the Son and the Spirit who both share fully in the divine nature, Basil, the great, emphasized the importance of distinguishing several key terms.

So he says this. He says, we don't speak of the Holy Spirit as unbegotten, right? Because we recognize one who is unbegotten and the origin of all things, the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ,

right?

So Basil says, well, we have the Father. And Scripture never calls the Father begotten, right? He's the unbegotten one. And he says, nor do we speak of the Holy Spirit as begotten, for by the tradition of the faith we have been taught one who is only begotten, the Son.

Right? Okay. Okay. The Spirit of Truth, he goes on, the Spirit of Truth, we have been taught to proceed from the Father and we confess him to be of God without creation.

[31:07] Interesting. Where on earth, one second, Julie, where on earth did Basil get this language that the Son is eternally begotten of the Father and the Son eternally proceeds from the Spirit in order to define their relationship?

Lo and behold, he got it from Scripture. John 1.14, what does John 1.14 say? It says, and the Word became flesh and dwelt among us and we've seen his glory, glory as of the only Son from the Father.

Now that word only there, if you have an older translation, it will render it only begotten. The Greek word is monogenes, monogenes, right? Which is sort of a special word in John that means to show that Jesus has a singular, kind of unique, eternal relationship with God the Father, sharing his exact nature, which is different from humans, right, who become children of God through adoption, right? The Son is the one and only Son, the only begotten Son. Sometimes this is called the eternal, remember the word is monogenes, so picking up on this root, this will sometimes be called generation and sometimes it will be called the eternal generation of the Son, right?

The Father from all time in his very being has always had a Son, right? So that's where the language of begotten comes from, it comes from Scripture.

[32:37] So the Son is monogenes, the only begotten of the Father, but what about the Spirit?

Well, the Scriptures never say that the Spirit is monogenes with the Father, instead it says this, listen to John 15, 26, Jesus says, but when the Helper comes, again, referring to the Holy Spirit, whom I will send you from the Father, the Spirit of Truth who proceeds from the Father, he will bear witness about me.

How does Jesus talk about the relationship between the Father and the Spirit? He uses this word. He uses language of procession. Now, what do those terms mean exactly?

What does it mean that the eternal Son is eternally begotten of the Father and that the eternal Spirit eternally proceeds from the Father? Can we parse them out a bit more?

Can we pin them down? And Basil says, hey, if you try to press any further than this, you're going to go, you're going to be frenzied with insanity, right?

Because he admits that with these words from Scripture itself, we're touching on an incomprehensible mystery. He says, who are we, he writes, to supply an account of the divine nature, which is so unspeakable and transcending all words?

[33:54] So, Basil, in a sense, says we have to be content with how Scripture speaks about these things. We can say what we can say and we have to acknowledge that there are some things as humans, as finite creatures, we'll never be able to fully grasp about God and that's part of God's glory.

So, it's important to keep in mind that when we talk about the begottenness of the Son or the procession of the Spirit, we're not saying that this is, that these are created beings, right?

We're saying that this is an eternal reality within God himself on the basis of Scripture. Now, the danger, as they kind of parse this out in the 4th century, the danger was we need to make sure that we're keeping in balance two important truths, right?

And the more we kind of press into this, we start to tip one way, right? We start to tip into forgetting that the Godhead is one essence, that there is one God, right?

So, we need to hold that at the same time as we hold that the three members of the Trinity eternally exist as distinct persons. So, Gregory of Nyssa insisted on holding together both the unity of the divine nature and the diversity of the divine persons.

[35:14] He writes this, he says, in personality, the Spirit is one thing and the Word another. Yet again, that from which the Word and the Spirit are, God the Father is another. But when you have understood the concept of what the distinction is in these, right?

The oneness of the nature does not allow division, right? There is distinction but not division. Thus, the supremacy of the one first cause, he writes, is not split up and cut up into differing Godships, right?

One God. So, although distinguishable in terms of personhood, right? The Son is the begotten one, the Spirit is the one who proceeds, the Father is the begetter and the proceder, right?

The one who gives forth, right? Although distinguishable in terms of personhood, they share the divine essence and consequently, the Cappadocian Father said, are to be equally honored, right? Basil writes this, he says, we glorify the Holy Spirit together with the Father and the Son from the conviction that he is not separated from the divine nature. So then in 381, on the basis of the work of the Cappadocian Fathers, in 381, the church holds another council, the Council of Constantinople.

[36 : 37] And this, unlike the earlier council that we talked about where they sort of made a statement about the Holy Spirit, this was an ecumenical or a general council of the church. This was the second great ecumenical council of the church.

And at this Council of Constantinople in 381, the church would further clarify and confess what it believed about the Holy Spirit on the basis of God's word. And the result of the Council of Constantinople is that the creed that was originally affirmed in Nicaea in 325 would be expanded on this point about the Holy Spirit.

Remember we said, remember in 325, they hammered out what we believe about the Son and then in exhaustion they said, and we believe in the Holy Spirit. No, it wasn't that. They had won the debate, right? But now further clarification was added in 381 at the Council of Constantinople.

So now the creed would read. Now the church would confess. As it confessed the Father and the Son, it would confess, I believe in the Holy Spirit, the Lord, the giver of life, who proceeds from the Father, who with the Father and the Son is worshipped and glorified, who also spoke through the prophets.

So what do we see in this expanded creedal statement? Well, first we see affirmed the full deity of the Holy Spirit, right? He's the Lord, the giver of life. Second, we also see the distinct personhood of the Spirit affirmed, right?

[37 : 53] He proceeds from the Father. He is distinct in his personhood. But this distinction in no way makes him what we might say less God than the Father or the Son, because with the Father and the Son, he is worshipped and glorified.

God. So, technically, what the Church continues to confess today on the basis of the work of these saints who came before us is technically called the Nicene Constantinopolitan, that's a mouthful, the Nicene Constantinopolitan Creed.

Now, no one can say that, so we just call it the Nicene Creed, right? And that would set down, this kind of expanded Nicene Creed, expanded in 381, that would set down what the Church continues to believe on the basis of the Holy Spirit up to the present day.

Now, we are running short on time, and I haven't gotten to the tragic part of the story about the person of the Holy Spirit, so I'm going to move kind of quickly, and then maybe when we start up next week, we can come back and start with a few more questions.

In the years after 381, the Church began more and more to kind of grow apart in East and West. Now, why was that? Well, the language was different. In the West, they spoke Latin, in the East, they spoke Greek.

[39 : 11] So there were linguistic differences, there were cultural differences, there were political differences, as the Roman Empire kind of collapsed in the West, but sort of kept trucking on in the East, right? So the Church was starting to drift apart in the centuries after 381.

And when it came to the doctrine of the Holy Spirit, as the Church in the West did with most theological questions, the work of Augustine became sort of the defining articulation of the Holy Spirit. He wrote a big work called On the Trinity.

And when Augustine started speaking about the relationship of the Father, Son, and Spirit, he increasingly came to speak about the Spirit as proceeding, not just from the Father, but from the Father and the Son. Because Augustine was reading Scripture and saw that the Spirit is the gift of the Father and the Son.

So he began to speak about the relationship more like this, that the Spirit proceeds from Father and Son, right? Now, that position of Augustine wasn't totally unprecedented, actually.

In the writings of Basil the Great, there's talk of the Holy Spirit being joined to one Father through the Son, right? And Basil also writes, the natural goodness and inherent holiness and the royal dignity extend from the Father through the only begotten Son to the Spirit.

[40 : 31] And Gregory of Nyssa also emphasized, the Holy Spirit is indeed from God and of the Christ, according to Scripture. So what Augustine was writing in the kind of late fourth, early fifth century wasn't unprecedented by those Cappadocian fathers in the East who were writing in Greek.

Now, where were the Cappadocian fathers in Augustine getting all this from? We just read a verse where Jesus said, the Spirit proceeds from the Father. Why are we inserting the Son into his procession?

Well, a few verses later, what does Jesus say in John 16, 7? Jesus says, nevertheless, I tell you the truth. It's to your advantage that I go away, for if I do not go away, the Comforter will not come to you. But if I go, I will send him to you.

And a little earlier, in John 14, 26, Jesus says, but the Helper, the Holy Spirit, whom I am whom the Father will send in my name, he will teach you all things and bring to your remembrance all that I have said to you.

So what do we have here? Jesus is saying that in the outworking of redemption on earth, the Holy Spirit is sent from the Father and the Son. Now, are we right to conclude that the triune God's, what we might call the God's inward eternal life, is reflected in his outward works?

[41 : 44] I think the answer the church has given time and time again is yes. Right? Because God is faithful and true and desires to reveal himself in grace towards us, we're right to believe that how God reveals himself in history is a true expression of his eternal nature.

So that means if the Father and the Son send forth the Spirit in the unfolding of redemption in history, that's because the Father and the Son are both involved in some way in the Spirit's eternal procession in the Godhead.

Karl Rahner, a Catholic theologian in the 20th century, coined this term. He said, the economic Trinity is the imminent Trinity. You think, what does that mean? Why are we talking about economics? Economy here means sort of the plan of God in redemption.

Right? So what was Rahner saying? He was saying, in theology, God's active, what we see of God in his saving work in history, that economic Trinity, working out his saving plan, speaks truly of who God is and has been in himself from all eternity, the imminent, the eternal Trinity.

Right? So, Augustine was simply saying, with a little more directness, and perhaps maybe a little less precision, what the Cappadocian fathers had said earlier, that the Spirit proceeds from the Father and the Son.

[43 : 10] The Cappadocians would want to say through the Son. Because remember, he was Basil the Great, right? Okay, so this is what Augustine's writing in the West.

It seems very convincing on the basis of Scripture. So in 589, a church council was held in Toledo, Spain. And at this council, it decided, following Augustine, that this teaching should be included in the language of the Nicene Creed.

And this is what's been come to be called, well, they wanted to insert it with a little phrase, 589, Toledo.

Filioque, a Latin term that means and the Son.

We believe in the Holy Spirit, the Lord, the Giver of life, who proceeds from the Father, filioque, and the Son. They insert one little word into the creed for clarity's sake, on the basis of the great teacher, Augustine.

[44 : 14] This is sometimes called the double procession of the Spirit. So the West was affirming what it seemed like Scripture teaches in the double procession of the Spirit. But here was the problem.

Guess who wasn't at the council in Toledo, Spain? Any of the leaders from the Eastern Church. They hadn't signed off on the addition.

From their perspective, the Western Church was acting independently, and perhaps even a little bit audaciously, to change the language of the creed. And from the East's perspective, the West didn't have the authority to do that.

Now, the Western Church, over the years, had a growing view of the authority of Bishop of Rome. So suddenly, what seemingly was a minor point of doctrine became a huge issue.

Right? Right? And it would eventually lead to what we call the Great Schism in 1054. In 1054, the Eastern bishops and the Western bishops excommunicate each other.

[45 : 22] And hence, what we call the Great Schism is the split, the formal split, the institutional split between the Western Church and the Eastern Church. And from that point forward, we start

talking about the Eastern Orthodox Church and the Roman Catholic Church.

Right? Or the Roman Church. Well, that's not bad. 500 years, right? Yeah! It took a while for it to hammer out. Today it would be next week. Well, you might have some truth about that, Richard. Yeah. That's right. That's right. I think what's unfortunate, I think what I want to say this morning is what was really at stake in the Great Schism was actually authority in the Church.

It was really about authority in the Church. The Western Pope claimed universal power of the whole Church. The Eastern patriarchs believed that all the major bishops shared equal authority. Right? But the filioque kind of gets caught up in this kind of tragic parting of ways.

And it's a tragic chapter in the history of church history, I think, because it meant that the doctrine of the Holy Spirit, the Spirit who is our unity as Christians, right, became this flashpoint for a major division.

[46 : 29] Now, there's been a lot of work between East and West since then, right? There's been a lot of rapprochement. Ah, but man, if you talk to some spicy Eastern Orthodox people, they can still get a little up in arms about this.

And, you know, basically, you know, sort of what happened was that both East and West became marshalling arguments for why the other was wrong. I mean, just argument after argument.

I thought about getting into some of those with Anselm, who was a great theologian in the West. But essentially, it sort of felt like, hey, you don't have the right to say that, and here's 50 reasons why you're wrong about that issue, right?

So it was a bit of a tragic history. Okay, we should wrap up. We're going to, in coming weeks, talk about an issue that came up in the Reformation, which was really about the authority of the Holy Spirit.

Where and how does the Holy Spirit authoritatively lead the church? Does he do so through ecstatic gifts and prophets? Does he do through the institutional magisterium of the church?

[47 : 36] Does he do so through Scripture? Where do we hear the authoritative voice of the Spirit? That's what broke out in the Reformation. In the modern age, of course, and we know this, one of the big issues is the gifts of the Spirit.

Which and what gifts are still active today, right? And this sort of, you know, a lot of this kind of goes back even into the early movement of our evangelical movement, right, with Wesley and all those. So, but we're going to talk about both of those things when we deal with both of those topics.

Let me just say a couple things in conclusion. Not only did the doctrine of the Holy Spirit didn't stop developing there, it kept going. But second, I think when we look back at this early history, notice the way that the church continued to return to Scripture as the source and the norm for what we believed about God.

What's so wonderful reading about some of these debates, especially if you read Athanasius or you read the Cappadocian Fathers, they're turning to Scripture again and again to say, what did the Scriptures teach? Now, yes, they did introduce some helpful terms to explain Scripture.

Essence, person, Trinity, right? But it was to the Word of God itself that the church continually returned to understand and articulate the Holy Spirit better, right? So Scripture was central in all of these debates.

[48 : 55] I think that's a great lesson for us. And third, I think we see that the early church cared a lot about the person of the Holy Spirit, right? Church councils were called.

Do you know how hard it was to travel from one end of an empire to the other? Right? I complain when I have to drive to Wallingford for something. These guys had to travel hundreds of miles to get to these councils.

Councils were called. Theological debates were taking up, right? Thinking rightly about the Holy Spirit mattered to the early church. And it should matter to us, right? The Holy Spirit is not some afterthought, some addendum, some footnote to the work of God.

The Holy Spirit is God. And as the Creed said, and both East and West can affirm this, that along with the Father and the Son, He ought to be worshipped and glorified.

All right, let's end there. Let me dismiss you if you have questions, because church is starting. But if you have questions, feel free to stay. I've got a few more minutes before I need to head over for worship. Thank you.