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## INTRODUCTION

The theologian Alister McGrath and others have famously described the Holy Spirit as “the Cinderella of the Trinity.”<sup>1</sup> In the past, the field of theology has often neglected a careful study of pneumatology (i.e., the doctrine of the Holy Spirit), devoting most of its attention to the “other two sisters,” by which McGrath refers to the Father (i.e., theology proper) and the Son, Jesus Christ (i.e., christology). While the historical waves of charismatic renewal have finally brought the Holy Spirit into the spotlight, some groups, particularly those that reject the doctrine of the Trinity, continue to “forget” him.

So, who is the Holy Spirit? According to Scripture, he is not merely the spiritual presence and power of God in the world but more than this. He is one of the three divine persons of the one and only true God. As such, the Holy Spirit shares coequally and coeternally the fullness of the single divine nature with the Father and the Son. He is not a powerful “force” to be wielded, but a person with whom we are supposed to relate. Yet, some deviants wish to challenge this understanding.

The full divinity of the Father and the distinct personhood or personality of the Father and the Son are largely assumed to be true and are generally unquestioned by most Christians. However, some persons question or even reject the full deity of the Son and the Holy Spirit, as well as the personhood or personality of the Holy Spirit and his distinction from the Father and the Son. This necessitates a biblical demonstration of these challenged teachings.

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## THE DIVINITY OF THE HOLY SPIRIT

**4 The Full Divinity of the Persons:** The three persons of God are fully divine and thus coequal and coeternal. The Father is God, the Son is God, and the Holy Spirit is God (featuring the “is” of *predication*).

The Bible affirms that the Holy Spirit is **fully divine** and, as deity, he is coequal and coeternal with the Father and the Son.

**4b.1** The terms “Spirit” (πνεῦμα [*pneūma*]) and “God” (θεός [*theós*]) often appear in parallel to one another or are used interchangeably about the Holy Spirit (e.g., 2 Sam 23:2 [cf. v. 3]; Acts 5:3 [cf. v. 4]; 1 Cor 3:16, 17 [cf. 6:19, 20]; 12:7–11 [cf. 12:28]).

**4b.2** Some statements in the Old Testament that were spoken originally by יהוה (*YHWH*)<sup>2</sup> or “the LORD” are attributed to the Holy Spirit in the New Testament (e.g., Ps 95:8–9 in Heb 3:7–11 [cf. Exod 17:7]; Isa 6:9, 10 in Acts 28:25–27; Jer 31:33, 34 in Heb 10:15–17), indicating that the Holy Spirit is יהוה or “the LORD.”

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<sup>1</sup> Alister McGrath, *Christian Theology: An Introduction* (Oxford, England: Blackwell, 1994), 240.

<sup>2</sup> This is the covenantal name of God known as the tetragrammaton.

**4b.3** The Holy Spirit is sometimes referred to as or explicitly identified as “the Lord” or κύριος (*kýrios*) in the New Testament, which is the Greek equivalent of the tetragrammaton or יהוה while still maintaining a distinction between the Holy Spirit and the Son, Jesus (e.g., 2 Cor 3:15–18).<sup>3</sup>

**4b.4** The Holy Spirit is described as possessing the incommunicable, essential/necessary attributes of deity—such as (a) eternity (e.g., Heb 9:14),<sup>4</sup> (b) sovereignty (e.g., 1 Cor 12:11 [cf. Heb 2:3, 4]), (c) omnipotence (e.g., Luke 1:35; 11:20 [cf. Matt 12:28]; Rom 15:18, 19; 1 Cor 12:11), (d) omniscience (e.g., John 14:26; 16:12, 13; 1 Cor 2:9–13; cf. Isa 40:13, 14?), and (e) omnipresence (e.g., Ps 139:7–12; John 14:16<sup>5</sup>).

**4b.5** Just like God, (a) divine honor and preeminence is ascribed to the Holy Spirit (e.g., Matt 12:30–32; cf. Mark 3:28, 29; Luke 12:8–10<sup>6</sup>), (b) he is invoked in prayerful calls and benedictions (e.g., Matt 28:19<sup>7</sup>; 2 Cor 13:14; Rev 1:4, 5), and (c) he is the initiator of the true worship of God (e.g., John 4:23, 24; Phil 3:3).

**4b.6** Specific operations or works of the Holy Spirit are actions that only God, because he is deity, can perform—such as (a) creation (Gen 1:2; Job 26:13; 33:4; Ps 104:30a); (b) providential renovation (Ps 104:30); (c) spiritually working upon or within humans (Exod 8:19; 31:1–11; 36:30–35), including regeneration or new birth (John 3:5–8; Titus 3:5); (d) resurrection of the dead (Rom 8:11); and (e) inspiration of the prophets, apostles, and other writers of Scripture (2 Sam 23:2; Isa 59:21; Jer 1:2, 8, 15, 19; Mark 12:36; Acts 1:16; 1 Cor 2:13; Heb 3:7; 9:8; 10:15; 2 Tim 3:16; 1 Pet 1:11; 2 Pet 1:21).

Concerning this biblical evidence of the Holy Spirit’s full divinity, theologian John C. Peckham writes, ““While there is less biblical data regarding the divinity of the Spirit, Trinitarians understand this to be a byproduct of

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<sup>3</sup> The prepositional phrase ἀπὸ κυρίου πνεύματος (*apò kyriou pneúmatos*) or “from Lord Spirit” contains a genitive construction that is interpreted and translated exegetically in most English translations, meaning that πνεύματος stands in apposition to κυρίου as in the simple translation “from the Lord, the Spirit.” This identifies “the Lord” as “the Spirit.”

<sup>4</sup> This passage not only affirms the eternity of the Holy Spirit, but also functions as a triadic passage, mentioning all three divine persons of the Trinity together—“Christ,” the “Spirit,” and “God” in that order.

<sup>5</sup> The ἵνα (*hína*) clause ἵνα μεθ’ ὑμῶν εἰς τὸν αἰῶνα ᾗ (*hína meth’ hymōn eis τὸν αἰῶνα ēi*) translates into English as “so that he [i.e., the ‘Helper’] is with you [plural] into eternity.” The subject of ᾗ is “the Spirit,” since the ἵνα clause is sandwiched between ἄλλον παράκλητον (*állon paráklēton*) or “another Helper” and τὸ πνεῦμα τῆς ἀληθείας (*tò pneúma tēs alētheías*) or “the Spirit of the truth.”

<sup>6</sup> Blasphemy is the offensive act of speaking sacrilegiously, irreverently, and profanely against God. If one can blaspheme the Holy Spirit, then he must be God. Otherwise, blasphemy against the Holy Spirit would not be properly called blasphemy.

<sup>7</sup> Ellen G. White insightfully comments, “Christ made baptism the entrance to His spiritual kingdom. He made this a positive condition with which all must comply who wish to be acknowledged as under the authority of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost. Those who receive the ordinance of baptism thereby make a public declaration that they have renounced the world and have become members of the royal family, children of the heavenly King. ... Those who are baptized in the threefold name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost, at the very entrance of their Christian life declare publicly that they have accepted the invitation ... . Let those who receive the imprint of God by baptism heed these words, remembering that upon them the Lord has placed His signature, declaring them to be His sons and daughters. The Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost, powers infinite and omniscient, receive those who truly enter into covenant relation with God. They are present at every baptism, to receive the candidates who have renounced the world and have received Christ into the soul temple. These candidates have entered into the family of God, and their names are inscribed in the Lamb’s book of life” (“God’s Purpose for His People,” Manuscript 27a, 1900 [April 19, 1900], Silver Spring, MD: Ellen G. White Estate). Also, “In baptism we are given to the Lord as a vessel to be used. Baptism is a most solemn renunciation of the world. Self is by profession dead to a life of sin. The waters cover the candidate, and in the presence of the whole heavenly universe the mutual pledge is made. In the name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit, man is laid in his watery grave, buried with Christ in baptism, and raised from the water to live the new life of loyalty to God. The three great powers in heaven are witnesses; they are invisible but present. In the first chapter of Second Peter is presented the progressive work in the Christian life. The whole chapter is a lesson of deep importance. If man, in acquiring the Christian graces, works on the plan of addition, God has pledged Himself to work in his behalf upon the plan of multiplication. ‘Grace and peace be multiplied unto you through the knowledge of God and of Jesus our Lord.’ [Verse 2.] The work is laid out before every soul that has acknowledged his faith in Jesus Christ by baptism, and has become a receiver of the pledge from the three persons—the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit” (“Preparation for Baptism, Part 2,” Manuscript 57, 1900 [August 12, 1900], Silver Spring, MD: Ellen G. White Estate).

progressive revelation, noting that emphasis on the Spirit comes late in the history of redemption and thus is explicitly reported ‘late’ in the canon of Scripture.”<sup>8</sup>

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## THE PERSONHOOD (I.E., PERSONALITY) OF THE HOLY SPIRIT

### 2 The Trinity of God: There are three united persons of God—the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit.

The Bible affirms that the Holy Spirit is a **person** (i.e., possessing **personhood** or **personality**), as are the Father and the Son.

What often causes people to misstep on this aspect of the Holy Spirit’s nature is the use of the term “spirit”—**רוּחַ** (*rûah*) in the Old Testament and **πνεῦμα** in the New Testament—for his designation. The term “spirit” is colloquially used to refer to an impersonal spiritual force or power rather than a person. However, these terms do not necessarily require that their referents be impersonal. For example, “God is spirit” (John 4:24 ESV); yet, no Christian would think of him as an impersonal entity. Also, God’s angels, believed to be personal celestial beings, are called “ministering spirits” in Heb 1:14 (cf. v. 7). Similarly, fallen angels, known as demons or devils, are designated as evil or unclean “spirits” in the Gospels (e.g., Matt 9:32; cf. Mark 9:17) and elsewhere (e.g., Lev 17:7 [cf. 19:31; 20:6, 27]; Rev 16:13, 14; 18:2).

Furthermore, sometimes the Bible refers to the whole of a person by using the term “spirit” (e.g., Phil 4:23; cf. Gal 6:18; Phlm 25; 2 Tim 4:22). “The term ‘spirit’ identifies a person as a complex creature whose inner being is characterized by the dynamic, living interaction of reason, volition, and emotions that make us who we are. It is the totality of a person as a unit, viewed from the perspective of inner dimensions.”<sup>9</sup> Therefore, we cannot assume that the Holy Spirit is impersonal simply because the term “spirit” is used to identify him.

**2b.1** The Holy Spirit is described as possessing the core traditional characteristics of metaphysical personhood in philosophy—such as (a) self-awareness or the ability of self-reflection (via first-person pronouns [“I,” “me,” “my,” etc.]; e.g., Acts 10:19–20; 13:2;<sup>10</sup> cf. Heb 10:15–17), (b) intellect/reason/rationality or the capacity for cognition/thinking (e.g., John 14:26; 15:26; Rom 8:6, 16, 26, 27;<sup>11</sup> 1 Cor 2:10, 11), (c) volition/autonomy/agency or decision-making ability to initiate action (e.g., Acts 15:28;<sup>12</sup> 16:7–10; 1 Cor 12:11 [cf. Heb 2:3, 4]), (d) emotion or the capability to feel sensations and emote (e.g., Isa 63:10; Mic 2:7; Rom 15:30; Eph 4:30), (e) relationality or the capacity to have social “I-Thou” relationships<sup>13</sup> with others (e.g., Rom 8:26, 27; 15:30 [cf. 5:5];<sup>14</sup> 2 Cor 13:14; Phil 2:1, 2), (f) communication or the ability to use language in interaction (e.g., 2 Sam 23:2; 1 Kgs 22:24; John 16:13; Acts 8:29; 10:19, 20; 13:2; 28:25; 1 Tim 4:1; Heb 3:7; Rev 2:7, 11, 17, 29; 3:6, 13, 22; 22:17), and (g) moral agency/ethical responsibility linked with the concept of “rights” (e.g., John 16:7–11; Phil 2:1, 2).

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<sup>8</sup> John C. Peckham, *The Doctrine of God: Introducing the Big Questions* (New York: T&T Clark, 2020), 223.

<sup>9</sup> Ángel Manuel Rodríguez, “Godhead: Equality, Differentiation, and Inter-Trinitarian Relations,” in *The Word: Searching, Living, Teaching*, vol. 2, ed. Artur A. Stele (Silver Spring, MD: Biblical Research Institute, General Conference of Seventh-day Adventists, 2022), 274.

<sup>10</sup> Acts 13:2 is indicative of a social “I-Thou” relationship between the Holy Spirit (**μοι** [*moi*] or “me”) and the prophets and teachers in Antioch (“you” of the 2nd-person-plural verbal form of **ἀφορίσατε** [*aphorísate*]; see v. 1).

<sup>11</sup> The term **φρόνημα** (*phrónēma*), used in Rom 8:26, 27, is “the faculty of fixing one’s mind on someth[ing]” or, in other words, one’s “way of thinking” (BDAG, 1066), presupposing one having a mind that can reason rationally and logically.

<sup>12</sup> The verb **δοκέω** (*dokéō*) describes a thinking and decision-making process of considering something reasonable or ideal, as in the English expression, “In my estimation, it seems good to me.”

<sup>13</sup> Jewish philosopher Martin Buber’s main proposition in *Ich und Du* (1923) is that we may address existence in two ways: (1) the attitude of the “I” towards an “It,” towards an object that is separate in itself, which we either use or experience, and (2) the attitude of the “I” towards “Thou,” in a relationship in which the other is not separated by discrete bounds.

<sup>14</sup> In Rom 15:30, the genitive construction **τῆς ἀγάπης τοῦ πνεύματος** (*tēs agápēs tou pneúmatos*) contains a verbal noun and functions as a subjective genitive, meaning that **τοῦ πνεύματος** or “the Spirit” is the subject of the verbal action portrayed in the modified verbal noun **τῆς ἀγάπης** or “the love.”

**2b.2** Some theologians claim that gendered personal language (i.e., masculine personal pronouns, as opposed to neuter impersonal pronouns) was used to reference the Holy Spirit (John 14:26; 15:26; 16:7, 8, 13, 14; Eph 1:14). However, this is not the case in the passages cited. Careful examination of the grammatical-sentactical relationships of the words in these passages reveals that there is nothing abnormal or meaningful in the use of pronouns in these contexts that refer to the Holy Spirit. The fact that παράκλητος (*paráklētos*) or “Helper” is *grammatically* masculine does not have any implication regarding the personality (much less the *natural* gender [i.e., masculinity]) of the Holy Spirit. The gender of παράκλητος, as well as that of πνεῦμα, is nothing more than a linguistic accident, and no theological conclusion should be drawn from it.<sup>15</sup> However, the personal functions implied in the term παράκλητος certainly suggest that the Holy Spirit is a person (as will be demonstrated below).

**2b.3** The Holy Spirit is often portrayed as being treated by humans in personal ways. This means that he is personally affected by humans, which is to say he is *passible*. The Holy Spirit can be blasphemed (e.g., Matt 12:31, 32; cf. Mark 3:29; Luke 12:8), lied to (e.g., Acts 5:3, 4), resisted (e.g., Acts 7:51), grieved (e.g., Isa 63:10, 11; Eph 4:30; cf. Isa 58:10), stifled (e.g., 1 Thess 5:19), and insulted (e.g., Heb 10:29). Furthermore, humans can respond reciprocally to the Holy Spirit (e.g., Acts 10:19–21).

**2b.4** The Holy Spirit is presented as separate and distinct from his power—that is to say, the Holy Spirit is not a power but rather *possesses* power (e.g., Luke 1:35; 4:14; Acts 10:38; Rom 15:13, 18, 19; 1 Cor 2:4, 5; 1 Thess 1:5).

**2b.5** Numerous operations or works of the Holy Spirit are of such a nature that they necessitate personhood or personality to be performed—such as (a) creating (e.g., Gen 1:2), (b) teaching (e.g., Luke 12:12; John 14:26), (c) instructing (e.g., Neh 9:20), (d) leading (e.g., Rom 8:14), (e) regenerating (e.g., Titus 3:5), (f) searching or examining (e.g., 1 Cor 2:10), (g) speaking (e.g., 2 Sam 23:2; 1 Kgs 22:24; John 16:13; Acts 8:29; 10:19, 20; 13:2; 28:25; 1 Tim 4:1; Heb 3:7; Rev 2:7, 11, 17, 29; 3:6, 13, 22; 22:17), (h) crying (e.g., Gal 4:6; cf. Rom 8:16), (i) interceding (e.g., Rom 8:26, 27), (j) commanding (e.g., Acts 8:29; 16:6, 7), (k) testifying or witnessing (e.g., John 15:26, 27; Rom 8:16), (l) guiding (e.g., John 16:13), (m) illuminating (1 Cor 2:12, 13), (n) revealing (e.g., 1 Cor 2:9, 10), (o) striving with people (e.g., Gen 6:3; Isa 63:10), (p) convicting (e.g., John 16:8–15), (q) causing Christ’s disciples to remember all things (e.g., John 14:26), (r) glorifying Christ (e.g., John 16:14), (s) appointing and sending church leaders (e.g., Acts 13:2, 4; 20:28), (t) working miracles (e.g., Acts 2:4; 8:39), and (u) raising the dead (e.g., Rom 8:11).

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## ADDITIONAL EVIDENCE

The following biblical evidence suggests that the Holy Spirit is *both fully divine and personal* (i.e., possessing personhood or personality), as are the Father and the Son.

**4b.7/2b.6** The Holy Spirit is mentioned regularly alongside of and in close association with the Father and the Son, who are also considered fully divine and personal, suggesting that he too is fully divine and personal (e.g., Isa 48:16; 63:7–14; Matt 3:16, 17; 12:28; 28:19; Luke 3:21, 22; John 14:16, 26; 15:26; 16:7–11, 13–15; Acts 2:33, 38; 10:38; Rom 1:1–4; 14:17, 18; 15:16, 30; 1 Cor 2:1–4; 6:11; 12:3, 4–6; 2 Cor 1:21, 22; 13:14; Gal 3:11–14; 4:6; Eph 1:3–14, 17; 2:18, 20–22; 3:14–17; 4:4–6; Phil 3:3; 2 Thess 2:13, 14; Titus 3:4–7; 1 Pet 1:2; 1 John 3:23–4:3; Jude 20, 21).

**4b.8/2b.7** In several scriptural texts, the Holy Spirit is deeply connected to the deity and person of the Son and yet *distinct* from him (as indicated by the use of ἄλλος [*allos*] or “another” in John

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<sup>15</sup> See **Excursus on 4c.2: Πνεῦμα and Grammatical Gender in Greek**.

14:16<sup>16</sup>), indicating that the Holy Spirit is also divine and has personhood or personality, as does the Son. For example, (a) there is a dual application of the Greek term παράκλητος to the Son (1 John 2:1) and the Holy Spirit (John 14:16, 26; 15:26; 16:7). As such, they share a plethora of economic actions in common with one another. Christ and the Holy Spirit speak together in the messages to the seven churches. They begin with words from Christ (Rev 2:1–6, 8–10, 12–16, 18–28; 3:1–5, 7–12, 14–21), and end with, “Hear what the Spirit says to the churches” (Rev 2:7a, 11a, 17, 29; 3:6, 13, 22 ESV). (b) Both Jesus and the Holy Spirit glorify another member of the Trinity. The Holy Spirit glorifies (John 16:14) and testifies about (15:26) the Son and has inspired the Scriptures, which testify of the Father (2 Pet 1:20, 21; cf. 2 Tim 3:16, 17). The Son parallels, glorifying (John 1:14; 2:11; 13:31, 32; 17:5, 24) and testifying about (8:12–14, 18) himself and the Father (12:28; 13:31; 14:13; 17:1, 4; 21:19) and teaching his disciples about the Holy Spirit (e.g., 14:16, 17, 26; 15:26; 16:7–15).

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## COMMON OBJECTIONS TO THE HOLY SPIRIT BEING A PERSON

Below are some common objections to the idea of the Holy Spirit being a person (i.e., possessing personhood or personality).

**Objection 1:** Some individuals have suggested that these instances in Scripture that appear to point to the Holy Spirit having personhood or personality are simply examples of personification or attributing personal characteristics to something that, in reality, is abstract and non-personal.

**Response 1:** Arthur W. Wainwright helpfully responds to this objection, writing, “If these examples had been few in number, they could have been dismissed as metaphorical. But since they come from different authors, and are comparatively numerous, they cannot lightly be pushed aside.”<sup>17</sup> The personal language used in the Bible for the Holy Spirit is so abundant that it cannot be merely relegated to the category of personification.

**Objection 2:** Some individuals have objected to the personhood or personality of the Holy Spirit because he is “poured out” of heaven upon people (e.g., Acts 2:7). Furthermore, we are instructed to be baptized in the Holy Spirit (e.g., Matt 3:11; Acts 1:5). Persons cannot be poured or immersed in other persons.

**Response 2:** These are metaphors to describe different functions of the Holy Spirit in the lives of believers and should not be understood in a literal sense. The apostle Paul instructed that people who believe in Jesus “have put on Christ” like clothing (Gal 3:27 ESV). Yet, persons cannot be worn as clothing, and Jesus is a person! Just as we are to be baptized in the Holy Spirit, we are also “baptized into Christ Jesus” (Rom 6:3 ESV; cf. Gal 3:27), but, again, Jesus is a person. These are all figures of speech, including those mentioned in the objection that concern the Holy Spirit. If impersonal metaphors used for Jesus do not cause us to doubt the personhood or personality of Jesus, then impersonal metaphors used for the Holy Spirit should neither stir doubt in his personhood or personality. The metaphor of pouring connotes richness and abundance (e.g., Hos 5:10; Ps 45:2; Rom 5:5). Hence, we are to experience a rich abundance of the Holy Spirit’s presence, power, fruit, and gifts in our lives. The metaphors of being baptized into Christ or the Holy Spirit refer to the conversion experience of new believers, meaning that our lives are to be fully surrendered to, overwhelmed by, and immersed in their eternally abiding presence and their teachings for life.

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<sup>16</sup> See **Excursus on 4b.8/3c.7: ἄλλος v. ἕτερος in John 14:16.**

<sup>17</sup> Arthur W. Wainwright, *The Trinity in the New Testament* (London, England: SPCK, 1962), 201, 202.

## EXCURSUS ON 3A.2 Πνεῦμα and Grammatical Gender in Greek

Many theologians and biblical commentators often assume that, in John 14:26; 15:26; and 16:13, 14, the neuter noun πνεῦμα is the antecedent of the masculine demonstrative pronoun ἐκεῖνος (*ekeinos*) because it is the nearest substantive that precedes ἐκεῖνος. This grammatical phenomenon is said to be indicative of the apostle John's belief that the Holy Spirit is a person. This supposed shift in grammatical gender from neuter to masculine puts ἐκεῖνος and its supposed referent πνεῦμα out of grammatical concord—that is, the use of ἐκεῖνος herein violates the Greek grammatical rule that a demonstrative pronoun must be in agreement with its antecedent in number and gender. This asserted grammatical incongruence in gender between ἐκεῖνος and πνεῦμα has been explained by these scholars as a case of *constructio ad sensum* or “construction according to sense.” This means that the pronoun ἐκεῖνος is masculine and not neuter because it is intended to agree with the *natural*—not grammatical—gender of πνεῦμα.<sup>18</sup>

John did indeed use masculine pronouns for the Holy Spirit: (1) the masculine demonstrative pronoun ἐκεῖνος, meaning “that one” when used pleonastically (14:26; 15:26) or “he,” when the force of the demonstrative has been weakened so that it functions as a third-person masculine personal pronoun (16:8, 13, 14); (2) the masculine relative pronoun ὃς (*hós*), meaning “who” (“whom” in the case of 15:26); (3) the third-person masculine personal pronoun αὐτός (*autós*), meaning “he” (“him” in the case of 16:7); and (4) the masculine reflexive pronoun ἑαυτοῦ (*eautoû*), meaning “himself” (16:13). However, in those same passages, John employed neuter pronouns as well—such as the neuter relative pronoun ὃ (*hó*), meaning “which” (14:17, 26; 15:26), and the third-person neuter personal pronoun αὐτὸ (*autò*), meaning “it” (14:17, twice; 15:26). If 14:26; 15:26; and 16:13, 14 are indeed cases of *constructio ad sensum*—meaning that John intended to refer to the personhood of the Spirit explicitly by using masculine pronouns—it would seem that there would be consistent use of only masculine pronouns, not neuter pronouns as well. Therefore, the use of both masculine and neuter pronouns “raises a red flag” for viewing 14:26; 15:26; and 16:13, 14 as cases of *constructio ad sensum*.

The pattern for how John used the nominative case of τὸ πνεῦμα τῆς ἀληθείας (*tò pneûma tēs alētheías*), or “the Spirit of the truth,” in the upper room discourse is one of appositional usage. In other words, every occurrence of the nominative case of τὸ πνεῦμα τῆς ἀληθείας in 14:16, 17, 26; 15:26; and 16:7–15, has the function of apposition in relation to παράκλητος, the subject nominative. Thus, the antecedent of the masculine pronouns used by John in reference to the Holy Spirit is the masculine subject nominative παράκλητος, not the appositional nominative πνεῦμα. This means that there is nothing abnormal or meaningful in John's use of pronouns in the contexts that refer to the Spirit. The fact that παράκλητος is *grammatically* masculine does not have any implication regarding the personality (much less the *natural* gender [i.e., masculinity]) of the Holy Spirit.<sup>19</sup> The gender of παράκλητος, as well as that of πνεῦμα, is nothing more than a linguistic accident, and no theological conclusion should be drawn from it.

However, the personal functions implied in the term παράκλητος certainly suggest that the Holy Spirit is a person (as was demonstrated above).

## EXCURSUS ON 4B.7/3C.8 Ἄλλος v. Ἐτερος in John 14:16

Some biblical scholars and theologians have made a further claim regarding the Greek adjective ἄλλος (*allos*) used in John 14:16, relating the Son and the Holy Spirit as παράκλητοι. In this text, Jesus called the Holy

<sup>18</sup> E.g., see Leon Morris, *Spirit of the Living God* (London: Inter-Varsity, 1960), 36.

<sup>19</sup> See Wilson Paroschi, “Another Paraclete: The Holy Spirit in John 14–17,” *Ministry* 84.4 (2012): 26–27; Daniel B. Wallace, *Greek Grammar Beyond the Basics: An Exegetical Syntax of the New Testament* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1996), 331, 332; idem, “Greek Grammar and the Personality of the Holy Spirit,” *BBR* 13.1 (2003): 97–125.

Spirit ἄλλον παράκλητον (*állon paráklēton*), “another Helper.” These scholars often understand the adjective ἄλλος qualitatively (i.e., indicative of the quality of the referent) to mean “another of the same kind. They usually contrast ἄλλος with the corresponding Greek adjective ἕτερος (*héteros*), which they understand to oppositely mean “another of a different kind.”<sup>20</sup>

What should be noted is that these scholars understand both ἄλλος and ἕτερος as bearing both quantitative and qualitative notions: ἄλλος compares two or more substantives that are qualitatively the same or similar, and ἕτερος contrasts two or more substantives that are qualitatively different. Thus, the argument is made that the Holy Spirit is a παράκλητος of *the same kind* as the Son because of the use of ἄλλος instead of ἕτερος, indicating that the Holy Spirit is equal to the Son qualitatively; he has the same (or equal) quality of divinity and personality as that of the Son.

New Testament scholar Wilson Paroschi rightly challenges this innovative argument.<sup>21</sup> While he allows for the possibility of ἄλλος containing “an allusion to the personality of the Spirit”—because the Holy Spirit would come to fill the vacancy left by Jesus at his ascension and to carry out works that require personality—he rejects any ontological reading that sees ἄλλος as indicative of Jesus and the Holy Spirit as having the same divine nature. This is due to Paroschi’s insistence that ἕτερος “usually involves a qualitative distinction” and ἄλλος is “merely quantitative,” stemming from his analysis of the use of these two terms in the New Testament. Thus, ἄλλον παράκλητον in John 14:16 should be better understood only *quantitatively* to mean that the Spirit is a παράκλητος in addition to the Son, such that there are two παράκλητοι, distinguishing the person of the Son as quantitatively distinct from the person of the Holy Spirit. They are not the same person.

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<sup>20</sup> E.g., see Morris, *Spirit of the Living God*, 36.

<sup>21</sup> See Paroschi, “Another Paraclete,” 26, 27.