

Appendix K

Exegesis for the Translation of the Phrase “the Holy Spirit” as Antecedent in John 14, 15 and 16

In this translation, the true scriptural understanding of the Holy Spirit is presented. The Greek New Testament reveals that the Holy Spirit is not a person. Rather, it is the power of God, which is imparted as the gift of God to everyone who repents of sin and accepts the sacrifice of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of sin. Upon true repentance, baptism and the laying on of hands, God the Father puts the power of the Holy Spirit within each true Christian, thereby making him or her His begotten child. This process is called conversion. However, it is not until the resurrection, when Jesus Christ returns to the earth, that all those who have died in the faith, together with those truly converted Christians who are still alive, will be born again. They will be transformed from fleshly human beings to glorified children of God and will reign with Jesus Christ as kings and priests in the Kingdom of God.

In his account of the begetting and birth of Jesus Christ, Luke clearly describes the function of the Holy Spirit as the power of God. Note the angel Gabriel’s message to the virgin Mary: “ ‘And behold, you shall conceive in *your* womb and give birth to a son; and you shall call His name Jesus. He shall be great, and shall be called *the* Son of *the* Highest; and *the* Lord God shall give Him the throne of David, His forefather; and He shall reign over the house of Jacob into the ages, and of His kingdom there shall be no end.’ But Mary said to the angel, ‘How shall this be, since I have not had sexual relations with a man?’ And the angel answered *and* said to her, ‘**The Holy Spirit** [Greek πνευμα αγιον *pneuma agion*] **shall come upon you, and the power** [Greek δυναμις *dunamis*] **of the Highest shall overshadow you; and for this reason, the Holy One being begotten in you shall be called the Son of God’ ” (Luke 1:31-35).**

Just before Jesus Christ ascended into heaven, He told His disciples that they would receive power from the Father: “And while *they* were assembled with *Him*, He commanded them not to depart from Jerusalem but to ‘await the promise of the Father, which,’ *He said*, ‘you have heard of Me. For John indeed baptized with water, but, you shall be baptized with *the* Holy Spirit [Greek πνευματι αγιω *pneumati agioo*] after not many days ... **But you yourselves shall receive power** [Greek δυναμις *dunamis*] **when the Holy Spirit** [Greek του αγιου πνευματος *tou hagiou pneumatos*, neuter gender] **has come upon you, and you shall be My witnesses, both in Jerusalem and in all Judea and Samaria, and unto the ends of the earth’ ” (Acts 1:4-5, 8).**

In the New Testament, the Greek noun *pneuma*, which is translated “spirit,” is in the neuter gender. Likewise, the Greek noun phrases that are translated “the Spirit,” “the Holy Spirit,” and “the Holy Ghost” are always and only in the neuter gender. No masculine gender noun is used anywhere in the New Testament to designate the Holy Spirit, but only the Father and the Son. The use of the neuter gender in every Scripture reveals that the Holy Spirit is not a person but the power that emanates from both the Father and the Son.

The forms of the noun *pneuma* that are found in the Greek text of the New Testament are as follows:

- 1) πνευμα *pneuma* spirit
- 2) το πνευμα *to pneuma* the spirit
- 3) το πνευματος *to pneumatos* the spirit
- 4) πνευμα αγιον *pneuma hagion* spirit holy
- 5) το αγιον πνευμα *to hagion pneuma* the holy spirit
- 6) το αγιον πνευματος *to hagion pneumatos* the holy spirit
- 7) το πνευμα το αγιον *to pneuma to hagion* the spirit the holy

Exegesis for the Translation of “The Holy Spirit”

The Greek noun *pneuma*, in all its various forms, is always and only neuter in gender. Likewise, all pronouns that refer to *pneuma* are always and only neuter in gender. If the Holy Spirit were a person, the nouns and pronouns in the Greek text would have to be written in the masculine gender, as are all the nouns

Exegesis for the Translation of the Phrase “the Holy Spirit”

and pronouns that refer to God the Father and Jesus Christ. However, nowhere in the Greek text of the New Testament is the Holy Spirit ever designated by a noun or pronoun in the masculine gender.

It is absolutely incorrect to translate any form or pronoun of *πνευμα* *pneuma* in the masculine gender. Unfortunately, because most translators believe in the doctrine of the trinity, they have deliberately and wrongly used the English masculine gender when translating the Greek neuter gender nouns and pronouns pertaining to the Holy Spirit. They have not made such a flagrant, determined mistranslation of the Greek neuter gender for any other word in the New Testament.

Following are five key verses in the Gospel of John that have been incorrectly translated in the *King James Version*:

1) John 14:17, *KJV*: “Even **the Spirit of truth; whom** the world cannot receive, because it seeth **him** not, neither knoweth **him**: but ye know **him**; for **he** dwelleth with you, and shall be in you.”

“**The Spirit of truth**” is translated from the Greek phrase *το πνευμα της αληθειας* *to pneuma tees aletheias*—literally, “the Spirit of the truth.” This noun phrase is in the neuter gender. The pronoun “**whom**” is translated from the neuter relative pronoun *ο*, and should accordingly be translated “which.” If the Greek text were expressing the masculine gender, the masculine relative pronoun *ος* would have been used instead of the neuter relative pronoun *ο*.

The three personal pronouns translated “**him**” are incorrectly translated into the masculine gender from the Greek neuter personal pronoun *αυτο* *auto*, which is properly translated “it.” If “the Spirit” were a person rather than the power of God, the verse would read *ο πνευματος*, rather than the neuter *το πνευμα*. However, there is no such masculine noun anywhere in the Greek New Testament. If there were such a masculine gender noun, the masculine pronoun *αυτος* *autos* would be used instead of the neuter pronoun *αυτο* *auto*. Translators who know and understand the rules of Greek grammar do not mistake the neuter pronoun *αυτο* *auto* for the masculine pronoun *αυτος*. Thus, the translation of the neuter pronoun *αυτο* in John 14:17 into the masculine personal pronoun “**him**” is completely incorrect. The neuter pronoun *αυτο* is used twice in this verse: “because it [the world] perceives **it** [*αυτο* *auto*] not, nor knows **it** [*αυτο* *auto*].”

The *KJV* translation of John 14:17 also violates another rule of Greek grammar. In the Greek text, a noun that serves as the subject of a verse often governs a number of verbs. In John 14:17, the noun phrase *το πνευμα της αληθειας* *to pneuma tees aletheias*, meaning “the Spirit of the truth,” is the subject. Since the noun *pneuma* is neuter in gender, the subjects of all verbs that it governs should be translated in the neuter gender. In John 14:17, two third person verbs are governed by this noun. In the first instance, the translators have incorrectly translated the third person verb *μενει* *memei* as “**he dwelleth**,” rather than “**it dwelleth**.” In the second instance, the subject of the verb *εσται* *estai*, “[**it**] shall be,” was not translated, making it appear that “**he**” is the subject of both Greek verbs.

A correct translation of John 14:17 should read: “Even the Spirit of the truth, **which** [*ο*] the world cannot receive because it perceives **it** [*αυτο* *auto*] not, nor knows **it** [*αυτο* *auto*]; but you know **it** [*αυτο* *auto*] because **it dwells** [verb *μενει* *memei*] with you, and **shall be** [verb *εσται* *estai*] within you.”

2) John 15:26, *KJV*: “But when **the Comforter** is come, **whom** I will send unto you from the Father, *even* **the Spirit of truth, which** proceedeth from the Father, **he** shall testify of me.”

The word “which,” referring to “**the Spirit of truth**,” is correctly translated from the neuter pronoun *ο*. In John 14:17, the translators of the *KJV* had incorrectly rendered this neuter pronoun as “whom.” However, in John 15:26, they have correctly rendered the neuter relative pronoun *ο* as “which.”

The descriptive noun “**the Comforter**” is correctly translated from the masculine Greek noun *ο παρακλητος* *ho parakleetos*. While this masculine noun is used to describe a vital function of the Holy Spirit, it does not designate the Holy Spirit, or “**the Spirit of the truth**,” as a person. A descriptive noun never changes the gender of the principal noun. For example: Jesus said that He is “the true vine” (John 15:1). The Greek word translated “vine” is the feminine noun *η αμπιλος* *he ampilos*. The use of this feminine noun to describe Jesus Christ does not change His masculine gender to the feminine gender. In exactly the same way, the use of the masculine noun *ο παρακλητος* *ho parakleetos* to describe a function of the Holy Spirit does not alter the fact that the Holy Spirit is neuter. Because the Holy Spirit is neuter in gender—not masculine—there is no basis in the New Testament Greek text for mistranslating and interpreting the Holy Spirit as a person.

Although the Holy Spirit is not a person, it is in accord with Greek grammar to translate the pronoun *ον* *on* as “**whom**” because its antecedent is the masculine descriptive noun *ο παρακλητος* *ho*

Appendix K

parakleetos, “**the Comforter.**” However, it is misleading to translate the personal pronoun *ον on* as “whom” when the principal noun is *το πνευμα της αληθειας to pneuma tees aleetheias*, which is neuter in gender.

The last part of this verse has been translated: “... **he** shall testify of me.” The use of the personal pronoun “**he**” once again gives the impression that the Holy Spirit is a person. However, that is not the meaning of the Greek text. The word “**he**” is translated from the Greek word *εκεινος ekeinos*, which means “that” or “that one.” As with the pronoun *ον on*, the antecedent of *εκεινος ekeinos* is *ο παρακλητος ho parakleetos*, “the Comforter,” which is a descriptive noun. Although it is masculine in gender, the principal noun is *το πνευμα της αληθειας to pneuma tees aleetheias*, which is neuter. The gender of the principal noun always takes precedence over the gender of the descriptive noun. Therefore, *εκεινος ekeinos* has been translated “... **that one** shall bear witness of Me” in order to reflect the true meaning of the Greek text.

The translation of John 15:26 should read: “But when the Comforter has come, **which** I will send to you from the Father, *even the Spirit of the truth, which* proceeds from the Father, **that one** shall bear witness of Me.”

3) John 14:26, *KJV*: “But the Comforter, *which is* the Holy Ghost, **whom** the Father will send in my name, **he** shall teach you all things, and bring all things to your remembrance, whatsoever I have said unto you.” As in John 15:26, the descriptive noun *ho parakleetos*, “the Comforter,” is used with the principal noun *to pneuma*, “the Spirit.” In the Greek text, the verse begins with these words: *ο δε παρακλητος, το πνευμα το αγιον, ο ... ho de parakleetos, to pneuma to hagion, ο ...* The noun phrase *το πνευμα το αγιον to pneuma to hagion*, “the Holy Spirit,” is the antecedent of the neuter pronoun *ο*, which has been incorrectly translated “whom” in the *KJV*. Since *ο* is a neuter relative pronoun, it should be translated “which.” If the Greek text contained the masculine pronoun *ος*, it should be proper to translate it as “whom” to reflect the masculine gender. However, the Greek text uses the neuter form of the pronoun, not the masculine form.

The pronoun “**he**” in this verse is translated from the Greek *εκεινος ekeinos* and should be translated “**that one.**”

The following translation of John 14:26 conveys the precise meaning of the Greek text: “But *when* the Comforter *comes, even* the Holy Spirit, **which** the Father will send in My name, **that one** shall teach you all things, and shall bring to your remembrance everything that I have told you.”

The translators of the *KJV* have also used the masculine pronoun “**he**” in verse 16 of this same chapter: “And I will pray the Father, and he shall give you another **Comforter**, that **he** may abide with you for ever” (John 14:16, *KJV*). As verse 17 shows, “the Comforter” is describing the Holy Spirit, or “the Spirit of truth,” which is translated from *to pneuma tees aleetheias*, the same noun phrase that is used in John 15:26. Since *pneuma* is the principal noun, the meaning of the pronoun is governed by its neuter gender, not by the masculine gender of *parakleetos*, or “Comforter,” which is a descriptive noun. This translation of John 14:16 accurately conveys the meaning of the Greek text: “And I will ask the Father, and He shall give you another **Comforter**, that **it** may be with you throughout the age.”

4) John 16:13, *KJV*: “Howbeit when **he**, the Spirit of truth, is come, **he** will guide you into all truth: for **he** shall not speak of himself; but whatsoever **he** shall hear, *that* shall **he** speak: and **he** will show you things to come.”

All six occurrences of the pronoun “**he**” in this verse refer to “the Spirit of truth,” which is translated from *το πνευμα της αληθειας to pneuma tees aleetheias*. Since *pneuma* is neuter in gender, all six pronouns should accordingly be translated in the neuter gender. The first “**he**” is an incorrect rendering of the Greek *εκεινος ekeinos* and should be translated “that one.” The remaining five occurrences of “**he**” are all subjects of verbs that are governed by the neuter noun *pneuma* and should be translated “**it.**”

The correct meaning of John 16:13 is reflected in this translation: “However, when **that one** has come, *even* the Spirit of the truth, **it will lead** [verb *οδηγησει odegeesei*] you into all truth because **it shall not speak** [verb *λαλησει laleesei*] from itself, but whatever **it shall hear** [verb *ακουση akouseei*] **it shall speak** [verb *λαλησει laleesei*]. And **it shall disclose** [verb *αναγγελει anagelei*] to you the things to come.”

5) John 16:14, *KJV*: “**He** shall glorify me: for **he shall receive** of mine, and **shall show** it unto you.”

As in John 16:13, the first “**he**” is translated from the Greek *εκεινος ekeinos*, meaning “that one.” Since the antecedent of *ekeinos* is “the Spirit of truth” in verse 13, both the noun and its pronoun are neuter in gender. The second “**he,**” which is the subject of the verb “**shall receive,**” is governed by

Exegesis for the Translation of the Phrase “the Holy Spirit”

“the Spirit of truth,” or **το πνευμα της αληθειας** *to pneuma tees aletheias*, and should also be translated in the neuter gender. The verb “**shall show**,” which the translators of the *KJV* have rendered as a compound verb with “**shall receive**,” is also governed by “the Spirit of truth,” and should accordingly be translated in the neuter gender.

This translation of John 16:14 correctly follows the Greek text: “**That one** shall glorify Me because **it shall disclose** [verb **αναγγελει** *anaggelei*] to you *the things that it receives* [verb **ληφεται** *lephetai*] from Me.”

As the New Testament reveals, the Holy Spirit is not a person; rather it is the power of God. All references to the Holy Spirit in the Greek text are in the neuter gender. The use of the descriptive noun “the Comforter,” which is masculine in gender, does not alter the neuter gender of the Holy Spirit. There is no basis in the New Testament for the claim that the Holy Spirit is a third person in a trinity.

Eminent Greek Scholar Refutes Personality of the Holy Spirit

The use of the pronoun **εκεινος** *ekeinos*, “that one,” does not affirm that the Holy Spirit has personality or is a person. The arguments concerning *ekeinos*, attempting to make the Holy Spirit a third person in the Godhead, are only unsubstantiated theological theories that are not based on the true meaning of the Greek. In fact, there is no place in the New Testament where the Holy Spirit is designated as a third person of a trinity. These fallacious arguments begin with the premise that the Godhead is a so-called “trinity”—a word found nowhere in the New Testament. Rather than seeking the truth of the Scriptures, the proponents of this theory must resort to twisted interpretations of Scripture in order to give a plausible, but false, explanation. However, the Greek New Testament does not teach that the Holy Spirit is a person, nor a third member of a triune Godhead. Rather, it teaches that the Holy Spirit is the power of God that He uses to accomplish His will.

The advocates of attributing personality to the Holy Spirit use several key Scriptures to attempt to prove their theory. One verse in question is John 15:26, which reads: “But when the Comforter has come, which I will send to you from the Father, *even* the Spirit of the truth, which proceeds from the Father, **that one** shall bear witness of Me.”

In a detailed refutation of their claims, the eminent New Testament Greek scholar and syntax expert, Daniel B. Wallace wrote of this verse: “The use of **εκεινος** [a masculine pronoun, *that one*] here [in John 15:26] is frequently regarded by students of the NT to be an affirmation of the personality of the Spirit. Such an approach is based on the assumption that the antecedent of **εκεινος** [*that one*] is **πνευμα** [*spirit* a neuter noun]: [It is claimed], ‘the masculine pronoun **εκεινος** [*that one*] is [also] used in John 14:26 and 16:13-14 to refer to the neuter noun **πνευμα** [*spirit*] to emphasize the personality of the Holy Spirit’ ” (Wallace, *Greek Grammar Beyond the Basics*, p. 331). In Footnote 42, Wallace noted: “The view is especially popular among theologians, not infrequently becoming the mainstay [the only basis] in their argument for the personality of the Spirit” (Ibid., p. 331).

“But this [conclusion] is erroneous. In all these Johannine passages, **πνευμα** [*spirit*] is appositional to a masculine noun. The gender of **εκεινος** [*that one*] thus has nothing to do with the natural [neuter] gender of **πνευμα** [*spirit*]. The antecedent of **εκεινος**, [*that one*] in each case, is **παρακλητος** [*comforter*, a masculine noun], not **πνευμα** [*spirit*, a neuter noun]. John 14:26 reads: ο παρακλητος, το πνευμα το αγιον ο πεμψει ο πατηρ εν τω ονοματι μου, **εκεινος** υμας διδαξει παντα ... (‘the Comforter, the Holy Spirit whom [which] the Father sends in my name, **that one** will teach you all things’). **πνευμα** [*spirit*] not only is appositional to **παρακλητος** [*comforter*] but the relative pronoun that follows it [**πνευμα** (*spirit*)] is neuter! This hardly assists the grammatical argument for the Spirit’s personality. In John 16:13-14 the immediate context is deceptive: οταν δε ελθη **εκεινος**, το πνευμα της αληθειας, οδηγη σει υμας εν τη αληθεια παση **εκεινος** εμε δοξασει ... (‘whenever **that one** comes—the Spirit of truth—he [*it*] will guide you in all truth...**he** [*that one*] will glorify me ...’). The **εκεινος** [*that one*] [in these verses] reaches back to v 7, where **παρακλητος** [*comforter*] is mentioned. Thus, since **παρακλητος** [*comforter*] is masculine, so is the pronoun [**εκεινος** “that one” is masculine]. Although one might argue that the Spirit’s personality is in view in these passages, the view must be based on the nature of a **παρακλητος** [*comforter*] and the things said about the Comforter, not on any supposed grammatical subtleties [concerning το πνευμα το αγιον “the Spirit of the truth,” which is neuter gender]. **Indeed, it is difficult to find any text** [in the New Testament] **in which πνευμα** [*spirit*] **is grammatically referred to with the**

Appendix K

masculine gender [because there are not any]” (Wallace, *Greek Grammar Beyond the Basics*, pp. 331-332, some bold emphasis and all bracketed comments added).

Wallace added further comments in related footnotes. Concerning John 16:13, he wrote: “Although translations of v. 13 such as that of the *NRSV* may be misleading as to what the subject of the sentence is (‘When the Spirit of truth comes, he will guide you...’), their objective is not to be a handbook for Greek students” (Ibid., *Footnote 43*, p. 332). To paraphrase, Wallace is saying that John 16:13 in the *NRSV* is an incorrect translation that does not follow the Greek text.

A correct translation of John 16:13-14 reads: “However, when **that one** has come, *even* the Spirit of the truth, it will lead you into all truth because it shall not speak from itself, but whatever it shall hear it shall speak. And it shall disclose to you the things to come. **That one** shall glorify Me because it shall disclose to you *the things that* it receives from Me.”

Wallace further refuted the notion that personality of the Holy Spirit can be found in the Greek New Testament. In another extended footnote he wrote: “Besides the Johannine texts, three other passages are occasionally used for this: Eph 1:14; 2 Thess 2:6-7; and 1 John 5:7. All of these have problems. In Eph 1:14 **ος εστιν αρραβων** [*which is the earnest*] refers back to **τω πνευματι** [*the spirit*] (v 13), but the masculine relative pronoun [**ος he/which**] (v.l.) is easily explained without resorting to seeing the theological motifs [of attempting to prove personality of the Spirit] ... In 2 Thess 2:6-7 **πνευμα** [*spirit*] is nowhere mentioned; **το κατεχον/ο κατεχων** [*holding back/one Who is restraining*] are often assumed to both refer to the Holy Spirit. But in spite of the fact that there is much to commend this view, it certainly cannot use clear natural-gender passages in support [of personality for the Holy Spirit], nor can such a known *crux interpretum* [critical interpretation] become the basis for such a syntactical point. [In other words, such an interpretation is contrary to the Greek.] First John 5:7 is perhaps the most plausible of the passages enlisted. The masculine participle in **τρεις εισιν οι μαρτυρουντες** [*three that bear witness*] refers to **το πνευμα και το υδωρ και το αιμα** [*the Spirit and the water and the blood*] (v 8), all neuter nouns. Some see this as an oblique reference to the Spirit’s personality ... but the fact that the author [John] has personified water and blood, turning them into witnesses along with the Spirit, may be enough to account for [the use of] the masculine gender [plural participle **μαρτυρουντες**—*bear witness*]. This interpretation also has in its behalf the allusion to Deut. 19:15 (the necessity of ‘two or three witnesses’), for in the OT the testimony only of males was acceptable. Thus, the elder [the apostle John] may be subtly indicating (via the masculine participle) that the Spirit, water and blood are all valid witnesses” (Ibid., *Footnote 44*, p. 332, bracketed comments and some bold emphasis added).

When the context of I John 5:6-9 is included, it is clear that Wallace is quite correct: “This is He Who came by water and blood—Jesus the Christ; not by water only, but by water and blood. And it is the Spirit that **bears witness** [neuter singular participle] because the Spirit is the truth. For there are **three that bear witness** [masculine plural participle] on the earth: the Spirit, and the water, and the blood [all neuter nouns]; and these three *witness* unto the one *truth* [that Jesus was God manifested in the flesh and died for the sins of the world]. If we accept the witness of men, the witness of God is superior. For this is the witness of God, which He has witnessed [through the Spirit, the water and the blood] concerning His Son.”

In I John 5:6 “the Spirit **that bears witness**” is translated from the neuter singular participle, **μαρτυρουν** *marturoun*. If John had intended to attribute personality to the Holy Spirit, he would have used a masculine participle, but he did not. Therefore, the shift to the masculine plural participle **μαρτυρουντες** *martuountes* in verse 7 does not by any means constitute attributing personality to the Spirit. Moreover, if the use of the masculine plural participle in verse 7 did, in fact, attribute personality to the Holy Spirit, then it would also have attributed personality to the water and the blood. However, no such argument has ever been made. Wallace’s analysis of the three witnesses in verse 7 with John’s use of the masculine participle is correct.

Proper analysis and exegesis of these critical verses clearly reveals that the Holy Spirit does not have personality. Therefore, the Holy Spirit cannot be a third person in a triune Godhead. The doctrine that the Godhead is a trinity of three persons is found nowhere in the Old or New Testaments.

Finally, the New Testament reveals that there are only two Persons in the Godhead—God the Father and Jesus Christ. The Holy Spirit is revealed to be the power by which God accomplishes His will. There is no basis in the New Testament for the claim that the Holy Spirit is the third person in a trinity.