



Spirit of God E15: The Spirit as the Third Person of the Trinity

Official Transcript

Speakers

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[Is the Spirit a Person? (0:00-10:18)]

[BibleProject theme song by TENTS]

Jon: Welcome to BibleProject podcast. We've been in a long conversation about God's *ruakh*, creating and sustaining all of life, giving humans wisdom and power, working through prophets to communicate God's words. And we looked at how humanity can't handle God's Spirit. But there is one human who can: Jesus, conceived by God's Spirit, led by God's Spirit, and resurrected by God's Spirit. And then we looked at the big showstopper: the Spirit poured out at Pentecost, filling the followers of Jesus so that they can continue the work of Jesus in their communities. We've covered a lot of ground. And today, we want to have one more conversation to focus on a final question: Why isn't the Spirit of God thought of as just energy? How did the Spirit of God come to be understood as the third person of the Trinity?

Tim: [audio clips from the episode below] There are sometimes where "spirit" and "power" seem synonymous, but then you also have lots of passages where the Spirit is talked about as it were a distinct agent.

Jon: Tim takes us to the Gospel of John—it's the passage we ended in last week—where Jesus talks about being united with the Father in the Son through this other person.

Tim: [audio clips from the episode below] He calls it the comforter, advocate, helper. And “He’s going to be with you forever, the Spirit of truth.” So this is an example of a passage where it’s like: Mmm, the Spirit’s more than an energy here.

Jon: Jesus goes on to say that the Spirit will teach the disciples and remind them of everything that Jesus said when he was with them.

Tim: [audio clips from the episode below] So the Spirit is going to be the one who cultivates awareness of who Jesus really is. A teacher feels like a distinct someone.

Jon: The Apostle Paul talks about the Spirit’s role in bringing us into union with God.

Tim: [audio clips from the episode below] God sent out the Spirit of his Son into our hearts so that we can cry out, “**abba**.” The Spirit is the one who shows us who we really are, which is sons and daughters of God, who call God Dad.

Jon: For the New Testament writers, the Spirit of God is the personal presence of God. The Spirit is not an abstract force. The Spirit is God’s self meeting us.

Tim: [audio clips from the episode below] The Spirit is the way to name not just something transcendent, above and beyond, not just something that happened in the past for me. It’s the one I’m encountering in this moment, right now.

Jon: Today, Tim Mackie and I begin to wrap up the series on the third person of the Trinity, the Spirit of God. Thanks for joining us. Here we go.

[Musical break: BibleProject theme song by TENTS (2:42-2:47)]

Jon: Hey, Tim.

Tim: Hi, Jon. Hello.

Jon: We got one last conversation in this pretty long series on the Spirit of God.

Tim: Yeah.

Jon: We’ve covered a lot.

Tim: Yeah. And I mean, we're talking about the Spirit of God.

Jon: We're here talking about the nature of God as spirit.

Tim: Yeah. Mhm.

Jon: And then we're talking about the nature of reality being sustained by God's Spirit.

Tim: [laughs] And the nature of the human person.

[BibleProject theme song by TENTS fades out]

Tim: And we're talking about a word that appears many, many, many hundreds of times throughout the biblical story, trying to synthesize, draw together all the threads.

Jon: Yeah. Mhm.

Tim: So it's a big undertaking.

Jon: It's a deep well.

Tim: Yeah.

Jon: But we're going to do one more conversation.

Tim: Yes. Yeah, what I'd like to address here is something that I've come across personally, and then I know is an issue for many people when they think about the Spirit of God. If you're introduced to the concept of God as a Christian in the terms of the Trinity, of God being one and three—

Jon: Yeah.

Tim: —three distinct persons or ways of being but one divine essence, that is, the one God that is three, Father, Son, Spirit, there's an infinite depth to that. But if that's how you're introduced—and I think it's a great way to introduce people [laughs] to think about God—then if you don't have any help and you just go back to the Bible, and you start reading in passages in the Hebrew Bible or the New Testament looking for that level of clarity and that kind of clear distinction, there are some texts that are being like: *"Oh, okay, I see that right there."* And there are lots of other passages where you're like, *"Wait, what? How does that fit? Is the Spirit a person or is the Spirit more like an energy?"*

Jon: Huh.

Tim: Or: What do you do with biblical passages that describe the Spirit in less personal terms?

Jon: Mhm.

Tim: [Jon backchanneling throughout] And this is a long-standing issue in Christian theology and lots of people's experience reading the Bible. I just would like to go with that, and both honor the tension, honor the question, but also at least show some ways forward that have been helpful for me and key biblical passages that help me along the journey.

Jon: Okay, that makes sense. The Father, the Son, and the Spirit.

Tim: Mhm. Mhm.

Jon: And so you're saying: Where do we get that, that the Spirit raises to the level of the Father or Son?

Tim: Yeah, exactly. That's right.

Jon: Yeah.

Tim: Because that has not always been clear to every Christian every time everywhere. So how does one get there? If one wants to get there, how does one get there?
[chuckles]

Jon: Okay. All right.

Tim: So first let me kind of pose the challenge from two angles: one Hebrew Bible, one New Testament. So the Spirit of God appears in the second sentence of the Bible.

Jon: Yeah. [chuckles]

Tim: Just right there. "In the beginning, God created the Heavens and the Earth." God, Elohim. "Now the Earth was wild and waste, darkness over the face of the deep, and *ruakh* Elohim was fluttering over the face of the deep waters." So even right there you have: God created, and Spirit of God—

Jon: Hovering?

Tim: —hovering, present within.

Jon: Mmm.

Tim: So right there, you could just say: Okay, so one way of thinking about—you use the word "God" when you talk about the source and author, originator of it all. God created the Heavens and the Earth. And when I say "Spirit of God," you could just take it as not

talking about something distinct, it's just God in the form, or imagined in the mode of spirit.

Jon: Mhm.

Tim: Just reading that doesn't necessitate one divine essence but two distinct persons.

Jon: Yeah.

Tim: And this text was written *centuries* before Jesus. And while there were many ancient Jews before the time of Jesus who wondered—and you can see them pondering: There's something more going on here to the depiction of God—that there is some inner complexity there to the divine identity, but it doesn't demand a trinitarian reading.

Jon: Right.

Tim: Another challenge when you're reading not the Hebrew Bible but even the New Testament is that the most consistent words connected to the Spirit in the New Testament are the words "life" and the word "power." So "*zoe*," life, and "*dunamis*," power. So much so that even at the end of the Gospel of Luke, when Jesus said, "I'm going to send you the Spirit," he doesn't even use the word Spirit. [chuckles] He says, "I'm going to send you what my Father promised, and you will be clothed with *power* from on high." And you can just do a quick little concordance search for how many times "spirit" and "power" are talked about throughout the New Testament, and it's a lot. We've looked at many.

Jon: Mhm. Yeah.

Tim: So "power" makes you think of—mmm, not a person. When I think of power, I think of energy.

Jon: Mhm. Yeah, force.

Tim: Force. Mhm. Yeah.

Jon: Impersonal.

Tim: Exactly.

Jon: Yeah.

Tim: [Jon backchanneling throughout] Exactly. Yeah. So you could read many of these passages to say: God's energy is going to be given to you as a gift, God's life-giving, energizing presence. So there could be even many texts in the New Testament if you only read them by themselves that don't demand a trinitarian framework.

Jon: Yeah.

Tim: [Jon backchanneling throughout] So this is a part of why this has been an issue in the history of Christian theology, is because there are sometimes—we're going to look at these now—where the Spirit is talked about as it were a distinct agent or a distinct entity acting alongside the Father and the Spirit as one but also separate. But then you also have lots of passages like this where Spirit and power seem synonymous, or like Genesis 1 where Spirit of God and God don't seem that distinct necessarily. So why wouldn't I think that? That's not the direction I've been pushing us. [chuckles]

Jon: Mhm.

Tim: So what are the passages that really potentially forced the issue of saying: There's something more here than just impersonal energy. What are those, and how did those ideas develop? There we go.

Jon: Okay.

Tim: That's the question.

Jon: Okay.

Tim: And we're going to go back to the place where we ended the last conversation, which is in Jesus in the Upper Room Discourse of John. It's in chapters 13 to 17. And these chapters are pivot—pivotally?

Jon: Pivotally important?

Tim: They are *of pivotal importance*—

[Jon and Tim laugh]

["Pure Joy" by Lofi Sunday feat. John Lee fades in]

Tim: —in the growing awareness among the apostles of the identity of the Spirit as distinct alongside the Father and the Son.

[Musical break: "Pure Joy" by Lofi Sunday feat. John Lee (9:50-10:18)]

[Clues in the Gospel of John (10:18-33:28)]

Tim: Okay, so let's meditate on some words of Jesus in John chapter 14. We actually looked at these already in the last episode—

["Pure Joy" by Lofi Sunday feat. John Lee fades out]

Tim: —so I just want to quickly highlight what's going on here. Jesus says, "I'm going to go away." He's referring to his death and resurrection and ascension back to the Father. And he says, "So I'm going to ask the Father"—and already, right there, there's a distinction between Father and Son.

Jon: Mhm.

Tim: He says in other places, "I and the Father are one." [chuckles] So the one God who is the Father and the Son. Actually, that's very significant, because there's already a category there for the one God being—

Jon: More than one.

Tim: —in some senses one [chuckles] but in other senses more than one.

Jon: Yeah. Mhm.

Tim: And what's happening with the Spirit—beginning to be talked about in that same way, as one alongside Father and Son who is distinct but yet one. But the concept was actually already on the table as Jesus forced the issue in his own language and teaching.

Jon: Right. And back to our God series, this wasn't a brand-new category in the Hebrew Bible.

Tim: Nuh-uh. Right.

Jon: The attributes of God's wisdom, God's word, God's name—

Tim: Right. Yes. Yes. The Angel of the Lord.

Jon: Yeah. So God would show up, and then there would be this ambiguity, like the Angel of the Lord. And it would be Yahweh speaking to Moses, and then suddenly, it's—

Tim: The Angel of Yahweh.

Jon: —the Angel of Yahweh.

Tim: [laughs] Yeah. Yeah.

Jon: And so is this God, or is this something distinct from God? And then God's wisdom can be personified as some sort of distinct entity.

Tim: Yeah. Mhm.

Jon: So there's already this category in the Hebrew Bible—

Tim: Yeah. That's exactly right.

Jon: —that God is so transcendent that: Why are we trying to [chuckles] make this so clean that, like—when we say God is one that there might be something more interesting going on.

Tim: [Jon backchanneling throughout] There's more there going on. Yes. [inhales] Yeah, man, we could do a whole episode on the last stages of the Hebrew Bible and language about the Spirit in Second Temple Jewish literature where you can actually see the development taking place of growing awareness that the Hebrew Bible has both a unified conception of God and is aware of distinctions within God's identity. But it's not only three, it's, like, multiple— [laughs] there's God's word, God's wisdom, God's name, God's Spirit, the Angel of God, which just means “messenger,” someone that God sends. So there's just multiplicity.

Jon: Yeah.

Tim: So Jesus comes onto the scene and what he's claiming about himself actually is intelligible within that cultural context.

Jon: Yeah.

Tim: Not for everybody. I mean, a lot of people were scandalized [chuckles] by his claims, but the mental slots were there for Bible nerds.

Jon: Right. Yeah.

Tim: Yeah. That's great. Thanks for making that point.

Jon: Mhm.

Tim: So Jesus says, “I’m going to ask the Father, because me and my Father are one, and we’ve been one forever,” as he says elsewhere. [chuckles]

[Jon chuckles]

Tim: “You’ve been loving me since before the creation of the world,” Jesus actually says forward in chapter 17. But “I’m going to ask my Father, and he’s going to give you another one”—he calls it the *parakletos*, the comforter, advocate, helper.

Jon: Okay.

Tim: But somebody who’s going to come alongside you when “*my new mode of physical existence is absent* [laughs] *from your awareness*.” And “he’s going to be with you forever, the Spirit of truth.” And then we talked about in the last episode, Jesus’s language here gets really poetic.

Jon: Oh, yeah.

Tim: Because the Spirit’s going to take up residence *with* you and *in* you. And then he says, “*I am coming to you.*” And *then* he says, “I am in my Father, and you all are in me, and I am in you all.”

Jon: Yeah.

Tim: And you’re like, “*Wait, I thought the Spirit is in you all, but now I am—I thought ‘Spirit’s coming to you,’ but then ‘I’m coming to you?’ I thought ‘the Spirit’s in you,’ and Jesus says, ‘I am in you. In fact, you’re in me, and I am in my Father’—*

[Jon laughs]

Tim: —“*which means you’re in the Father.*”

[Jon laughs]

Tim: “*But you’re in my Father by being in me.*”

Jon: Mhm. Yeah. And “*You are in me because I’m sending you the Spirit*”—

Tim: Exactly. Right.

Jon: —“*and when you experience the Spirit, you’re going to be experiencing me.*”

Tim: Right. Yeah, you can actually kind of draw it if you just drew four words on a page.

Jon: Yeah.

Tim: It would be “the Father,” and then, like, a little arrow—

[Jon laughs]

Tim: [Jon backchanneling throughout] —leading to “the Son.” And then “the Son” with a little arrow pointing [chuckles] at “the Spirit.” And then “the Spirit” with a little arrow pointing in “y’all.” And then you could almost just draw an arrow that runs a circle all the way back to “the Father.”

Jon: Yeah. And back to Jesus.

Tim: And back to Jesus. And—yeah.

Jon: Yeah. And to the Spirit. And then you can draw an arrow from Jesus to the Spirit.

Tim: Yes. [laughs]

Jon: And you can arrow from the Spirit to the Father.

Tim: Yeah, that’s right. But it’s important the Father is depicted as, like, the source and sender, originator. And the Father sends the Son, and then the Father sends the Spirit, but because the Son asked—right?—like, “*Here, I’m going to ask.*” And then the Spirit goes into you. And “If you’re in the Spirit, you are in me, which means we are in the Father.”

Jon: Yeah.

Tim: So this is an example of a passage where it’s, like: Mmm, the Spirit’s more than an energy here. The Spirit is *someone* who’s distinct from the Father and the Son.

Jon: Hmm.

Tim: It’s someone you can know. You *know* him.

Jon: Yeah, okay. Yeah, that’s very personal.

Tim: Yeah, that’s like the language of a person.

Jon: Yeah.

Tim: So in a few sentences, Jesus brings up the Spirit again. And he says, “Listen, that come-alongside one, the paraclete, the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in my name” —

Jon: Hmm.

Tim: Isn’t that interesting? He just said, “I’m going to ask the Father, and the Father’s going to send. . .” And now he’s saying, “The Father will send *in my name.*”

Jon: Kind of as an ambassador?

Tim: Yeah, there you go. Yes. Ah, because look at what he says the Spirit’s role is here. “The Spirit will teach you all things and will bring to your remembrance everything I’ve

said to you.” Okay, this is super interesting. So this is naming a dynamic at work in the Gospel of John. I talked about it in the last episode, where John, more than any of the other Gospel authors, breaks into the story in these parentheses to talk to you, the reader.

Jon: Mhm.

Tim: And here’s an example: John chapter 2, Jesus goes into the temple, and he overturns the tables, makes the whip—you know? Well-known story.

Jon: Mhm.

Tim: Then Jesus said to the leaders of the Jerusalem temple, “Destroy this temple, and in three days I’m going to raise it up.” And they’re like, “*Well, that’s impossible.*”

Jon: Yeah. That’s some quick building.

Tim: That’s right. And then John whispers in our ear: [whispering] “The temple he was speaking about is his body, and when he was raised from the dead, his disciples remembered that he said this. That’s when they believed the Scriptures and the word that Jesus had spoken.”

Jon: Hmm.

Tim: “Okay, back to the story.”

Jon: [laughs] So they experienced this whole phase where Jesus had died, they saw him, then he ascended, and then they’re like, “*Okay, what’s going on?*”

Tim: Yeah. [laughs]

Jon: And there was this whole—

Tim: Period.

Jon: —period of time where they’re just putting it all together.

Tim: Mhm. Yes. They’re remembering his words and teachings and the events. They have their Scriptures open, that is, the Hebrew Scriptures—right?—he says here—

Jon: Yeah.

Tim: But then there’s another element to the mix here.

Jon: Mmm. Yeah, the other element.

Tim: Because it says here, “His disciples remembered what he had done and said.”

Jon: Mhm. And that’s the Spirit helping them.

Tim: [excited] Yes. Yeah. “The Spirit will teach you and bring to you remembrance everything I’ve said.” So it’s this dynamic where the Gospel of John is telling you: The Gospel account itself is the product of not just eyewitness memories written down the moment they happened, but it’s actually the product of a long period of the disciples meditating, but also then claiming to say—and under the guidance of the Spirit—to see what was really going on, like the deeper significance. So it’s as if Jesus is—what do you say?—flash-forwarding—

[Jon and Tim laugh]

Jon: Yeah.

Tim: —to what is going to happen to lead to the production of the book that you’re reading these words in. [laughs]

Jon: [chuckles] Yeah. And not just to the production of the book, but to them—

Tim: Ooh. Right.

Jon: —learning how they’re going to go on and be the body of Jesus.

Tim: Exactly. Yeah, that’s right. Yeah, so it’s just a good example that the Gospel authors are signaling here that the book you’re reading isn’t just video camera footage. It’s actually the product of many years of prayerful meditation and guidance by the Spirit to tell you not just what Jesus said and did but what it meant really. And all of that’s a part of this book.

Jon: Hmm.

Tim: And notice, again, the Spirit here is somebody who comes from the Father and the Son, and “he will help you remember what I said.” So again, it doesn’t seem like an energy, [chuckles] an energy to remember. This is somebody alongside the Father and the Son, but the goal of the Spirit is not to, like, be the star of the show. It’s to point people to Jesus, to the Son. Right? “He’s going to teach you to remember everything that I said.”

Jon: Mhm. Yeah. And you’re saying this doesn’t feel like an energy because an energy doesn’t teach?

Tim: Oh, right. Mhm. I guess so. I guess it—you could receive a burst of mental energy that helps you remember something, and then be like, “*Ooh, did I just encounter a person?*” Maybe you wouldn’t necessarily— [laughs]

[Jon laughs]

Tim: —say that.

Jon: [chuckles] Yeah.

Tim: But “he will be your teacher” feels like a distinct someone alongside the Father and Son.

Jon: Yeah. Right.

Tim: He picks up this thread again from a different angle in chapter 15 of John, in verse 26. Jesus says, “When this paraclete, the alongsider, comes, who I will send to you from the Father—”notice [laughs] he said, “I’m going to ask my Father,” in 14, “and he’s going to send,” then he just said, “The Father’s going to send the Spirit in my *name*.” That’s 14:26. Now he says, “The Spirit whom *I will send to you* from my Father.”

[Jon and Tim laugh]

Jon: Yeah. So who’s doing the sending here?

Tim: Yeah. You know, it’s interesting. Think about that little variation of: The Spirit will be in you. I’m coming to you. I’m—

Jon: Yeah. Mhm. Same thing’s happening.

Tim: Yeah, this is like Jesus’s way of communicating that John has, like, turned into an art form in terms of how he shaped the teachings, where it’s actually through Jesus saying different things that seem like, on the surface: How are those the same?

Jon: Yeah.

Tim: And it forces you to think and then draw the conclusion yourself, but it’s, like, implicit. So he says, “I’m going to send the Spirit to you from my Father, that is the Spirit of truth, who *proceeds* from the Father.” This is a very important line in the history of Christian theology. The Spirit proceeding from the Father. Sent by and through the Son, but proceeding from the Father.

Jon: What does it mean to proceed?

Tim: It’s [chuckles] literally just go out from. [chuckles]

Jon: Okay.

Tim: Yeah.

Jon: To go out from.

Tim: To go out from. Yeah.

Jon: To originate from?

Tim: Mhm. Mhm.

Jon: Okay.

Tim: Yeah. In other words, the concept of God at the heart of trinitarian thought is that the Father is the eternal and infinite source of all things, including the Son and the Spirit. But the Son and the Spirit are also described in the Bible as those through whom creation itself came into existence. God created through the Son, and he created through the Spirit in multiple places in the Bible. So the Spirit and the Son are not creations in terms of, like, there was a time when they weren't, and then they were.

Jon: Hmm.

Tim: The scriptural language pressures us to see the Father birthing the Son or the Father sending out or generating the Spirit in a way that transcends time, but is just an eternal fact about God. So you get these concepts—

Jon: So in some way, God is the source, but in another sense, there isn't an origination —

Tim: Point in time.

Jon: Right.

Tim: And we're to the heart of it. This is the heart of a trinitarian concept of God that's pressured by biblical texts like this to come to the conclusion that the Christian definition of God is an eternal Father, eternally generating one who is both [laughs] one and distinct from the Father, that is, the Son, and then sending out the Spirit to unify Father and Son, and both the Father and the Son through him to create a world that is itself redeemed and invited into relationship with [laughs] Father, and Spirit, and Son.

Jon: Mhm.

Tim: And somehow, those three are one, but they are distinct from each other. But this language of proceeding from the Father, in John 15:26, was really—

Jon: It really forces the distinct.

Tim: Yes, yes.

Jon: Yeah.

Tim: "I will send you from the Father the Spirit of truth who proceeds from the Father." And then, this next line is key: "He will bear witness about me," or in some translations have "testify." So now to, like, that courtroom—

Jon: Oh, the legal part of the advocate, the paraclete.

Tim: Yes. Yes. The paraclete could, in first-century Greek, refer to what we would say, like, is a lawyer, [laughs] somebody who comes to stand alongside you and advocate for you or testify the way, like, a witness in a trial might. So the Spirit is going to be the one who cultivates awareness of who Jesus really is. Who is Jesus, really? He's kind of a hard guy to figure out. How does somebody come to really grasp who Jesus is? And what he's saying here is that it's the generous work of the Spirit to help people come to see that truth and reality. And we're kind of back to that meta element in the Gospel where Jesus is describing the process that the disciples had to undergo [laughs] themselves to even produce the account of Jesus that we're reading right now. Because in a way, the Gospel of John is witness. It's a testimony to who Jesus really is.

Jon: Mmm. Yeah.

Tim: And the Spirit's role is to help draw people into that awareness. Mhm. So he says, "The Spirit's going to testify about me, and you all will also testify or bear witness [chuckles] about me because you've been with me from the beginning." So just logically, if you are telling someone else about me, you are not me.

Jon: Oh, okay. [laughs]

[Tim laughs]

Jon: Sure.

Tim: Yeah, that's the basic idea.

[Jon and Tim laugh]

Jon: Yeah, there's a distinction between the Spirit and Jesus, and the Spirit and the Father.

Tim: That's right. Yeah. There's two last statements about the Spirit in chapter 16. Jesus says, "The Spirit of truth is going to come and guide you all," that is, the disciples, "into all truth. And he will not speak on his own initiative. Rather, whatever he hears, he will speak. He'll disclose or reveal to you what is going to come, and he will honor me" or "glorify me because he'll take what's mine and he'll reveal it to you. Everything that the Father has, that's mine. So he," that is, the Spirit, "is going to take [laughs] what's mine, and reveal it to you."

Jon: So this passage feels a little more like an impersonal energy then. There's not as much agency here. Right?

Tim: Oh. Oh, interesting.

Jon: It's not going to come and have a point of view. It's going to just be like, "*I'm just a conduit of something else.*"

Tim: Okay, yeah, in other words, the Spirit doesn't have new content.

Jon: Yeah. Or even a voice in crafting that content. It's just: "*Whatever I hear, I'm going to speak.*"

Tim: Mhm. That's right.

Jon: Feels like a telephone wire.

Tim: Yeah.

Jon: It's very impersonal.

Tim: I see. I see. But at the same time, the activities describing the Spirit do, I think, press in a personal direction. "He will guide you. He won't be speaking on his own, but he's going to hear things from me," Jesus says, "and then he speaks that to you." So if somebody's guiding and speaking to you that's different—even if it's on someone else's behalf, I don't imagine them as being the same person.

Jon: Yeah.

Tim: You know? If—

Jon: But I think the question isn't: Is it the same person or not? It's: Is this a person, or is this an energy?

Tim: Oh. Yeah, yeah, yeah.

Jon: Is this a person, or is this just some sort of, like, impersonal way?

Tim: Ah, I see.

Jon: And—

Tim: You're saying: Because I could, like, write a book—

Jon: Yeah.

Tim: —that is telling you everything that my wife's told me.

Jon: Yeah.

Tim: [chuckles] And the book could guide you—right?—and reveal to you everything.

Jon: Right. Yeah.

Tim: But that doesn't mean that—

Jon: The book is a person.

Tim: The book is a person. Okay, yeah, you're right. Maybe this passage doesn't, by itself, yeah, point to that.

Jon: Right. Yeah.

Tim: Well—so I think that's—I think that's what I want to be honest about then, is that well-intentioned readers [chuckles] of these texts have wrestled with: How do you put a bigger picture together here?

Jon: Right. Yeah.

Tim: So one New Testament scholar who really helped me process this theme is a German scholar, Joerg [or Jörg] Frey. He wrote a provocative little essay called "How Did the Spirit Become a Person?"

[Jon and Tim chuckle]

Tim: [Jon backchanneling throughout] But essentially, he's tracking with that there's these kind of two patterns of language about the Spirit in the New Testament. One is more impersonal, of the power or energy, and then one other pattern is a group of texts that speak of the Spirit more as a person. And he really focuses on John. He puts it this way, so let's just process how he summarizes this. He says, "The legacy of the Spirit's work in the Gospel of John is only derived from Jesus."

Jon: Legacy. Meaning?

Tim: What the Spirit has to give and pass on is actually from Jesus.

Jon: Okay.

Tim: And that's in the passage we just read.

Jon: Right.

Tim: That was kind of the main idea.

Jon: Yep.

Tim: Frey goes on: "It's Jesus who promises the coming of the Spirit after his departure. And the Spirit is said to remind of Jesus's words and deeds. Everything the Spirit does is taken from the realm of Jesus. As such, the Spirit is Jesus's delegate and the one empowering the disciples." So that's one thing.

Jon: Yep.

Tim: So there's no original content—

[Jon and Tim laugh]

Jon: The Spirit isn't like, "*All right, Jesus, you had to go, now I'm going to come, and I'll do some*"—

Tim: Some new stuff.

Jon: "Some *new stuff*."

Tim: It is new stuff. Like, it's a new time and place.

Jon: Mmm. Okay.

Tim: But it's also—has to be in line with the old stuff, right? If the old stuff is what Jesus said and did. [laughs]

Jon: Well, I mean, Jesus came and taught.

Tim: Yeah.

Jon: And then it seems like the idea here is: The Spirit's going to come and remind you and kind of connect all the dots.

Tim: Mhm.

Jon: There isn't going to be some, like, net new teachings.

Tim: Right. Yeah, some brand new thing that has no precedent or isn't rooted in the teachings of Jesus. Yeah, so Frey goes on, "The fact that the Gospel openly admits that the disciples didn't understand Jesus's words and actions during his earthly ministry but only afterwards—"we read one of the passages—

Jon: Yeah.

Tim: "That shows that the image of Jesus painted in this Gospel, which is based on the testimony of the beloved disciple, it is itself the result of this post-Easter remembrance with the Spirit as teacher and guide. The claim of the Gospel of John," Frey concludes, "is that the deeper perception of Jesus found within it is properly authored by the Spirit who taught the disciples in the post-Easter period." So in other words, this whole thing about, "He will take from what is mine and give it to you," within John, it's Jesus referring to how the very portrait of himself that you're reading in this book came about. [laughs]

Jon: Yeah.

Tim: So the claim is that this is a deeper understanding of Jesus's identity, but it's not, like, net new content. It's fully in sync with what Jesus said and did, even though it might be some new *ways* of expressing who Jesus is.

Jon: Mhm. Some new insight about why it's significant or what he fully meant.

Tim: Yeah, it's naming this dynamic.

Jon: Okay, and so in what way does that lend us to then say, "*Okay, the Spirit's a person*"?

Tim: Ah. Right.

Jon: Versus: "*The Spirit is insightful energy.*"

Tim: Yeah. [chuckles] Yeah, sure. Well, I guess it just comes down to: How do I coherently understand this language of one who's alongside the Father and the Son, who teaches, who reminds, who guides, who takes up residence—he's going to use the word "convict" later on— [chuckles] "the Spirit will convict the world of sin, righteousness, and judgment." So it's more that these verbs in this portrait—you already have the category of God being one and more than one. [laughs]

Jon: Yeah. Yep.

Tim: And the ways that Jesus is described as one and more than one alongside the Father are very parallel to this language about the Spirit being one with the Father and Son, but yet also more than one.

Jon: Mhm.

Tim: And this is the dynamic that led to the birth—

[“Eucalyptus” by Lofi Sunday feat. Eluzai fades in]

Tim: —of the greater clarity and distinctions in Christian language about God as the Trinity.

Jon: Okay.

Tim: But these are the passages that are some of the passages at the ground floor. So I want to show you something more still.

Jon: Okay.

Tim: But that's kind of a summary of the dynamic in the Gospel of John.

[Musical break: “Eucalyptus” by Lofi Sunday feat. Eluzai (32:56-33:28)]

[Persons of the Trinity Assumed in Paul's Writings (33:28-45:52)]

Tim: We already looked at multiple passages in Paul a few episodes ago. I think what I just want to show is—

["Eucalyptus" by Lofi Sunday feat. Eluzai fades out]

Tim: —the Apostle Paul and his letters are actually chronologically earlier than any of the Gospels. [chuckles] So they're coming from the 40s and the 50s BC, like, two decades after resurrection weekend and Pentecost. So in that sense, they're the earliest witnesses we have to how Christians thought about and talked about God and the identity of Jesus and the Spirit. And what is so fascinating is that Paul shows a fully three-and-one understanding of God's identity, and he actually never even takes time to unpack it as a point of focus.

Jon: Mmm.

Tim: For example, he can write to the Galatians, who he's pretty ticked off at, and in a moment of trying to remind them of their truest identity, he can say something like this. He can say, "You all are children of God, sons and daughters of God. And God sent out the Spirit of his Son into our hearts so that we can cry out, '*Daddy*,' '*Abba*.'" So we can call God our Father. This is almost exactly the little chain of words that I was trying to draw out, imaginatively, in the Gospel of John.

Jon: Right. Oh, right, right, right, right. Yeah. From God to Son to Spirit to us.

Tim: Yeah. God sent out the Spirit of his Son into us so that we can call God our *abba*.

Jon: Yeah. Now Paul could have said this as, "God sent out God's Spirit."

Tim: Oh, right.

Jon: [Tim agreeing throughout] To teach things or to remind you of the things of the Son or to connect you to the Son so that you can cry *abba*, Father. But he calls out: It's the Spirit of the Son.

Tim: Yeah, that's right. Yeah, so this is Paul's way of saying exactly what John was saying: The Spirit isn't some spirit of some other thing. It's the Jesus Spirit, the Spirit that shares and points to Jesus. And that is the Spirit's role. I mean, maybe this little mental exercise may help, but it may not. But when we think about the question of identity—like: Who is somebody?

Jon: Yeah.

Tim: Usually, or maybe always, when we say, like: "Who are you?" The way that we describe who somebody is, or who I am, is actually by describing not me, but I describe the things that I am related to. So who am I? Well, I am a dad. I am a husband. I'm a son. I am, hopefully, a friend. [laughs] I'm an employer. I am somebody who has, whatever, lived in this place. The main ways we identify ourselves are by describing the things that are not us—

Jon: [chuckles] Yeah, our relationships.

Tim: [Jon backchanneling throughout] —that—the unique—yeah, the unique cocktail of places and people that come around my story and my history. So there's something essential, here, then, that, who God is, in Christian thought, is the God who sent the Son and who sends the Spirit. Who is the Son? The Son is the one who is eternally generated and loved by the Father. Who is the Spirit? The Spirit is the one who was sent as the voice of love between the Father and the Son, and to show other people how amazing the Son is so they can come to love the Son and realize that they themselves are sons and daughters. So who each one of the three are is only who they are defined in relationship to each other. God is the God of the Son and the Spirit, and the Son is the Son of God, who sends the Spirit, and the Spirit is the Spirit of God—

Jon: And the Spirit of Jesus.

Tim: Exactly. Right.

Jon: And so why does Paul focus on the Spirit being the Spirit of Jesus, here?

Tim: Oh, I see. Because the Spirit of the Son is the one who clues us in to our identity as sons and daughters of God. The Spirit is the one who shows us who we really are, which is sons and daughters of God, who call God Dad. So God helps us see that we are sons and daughters of God by sending the Spirit through the Son. Not just the Spirit of God, but the Spirit of the Son.

Jon: Yeah, and why is that distinction important here?

Tim: Because it's when I look at the Son of God that I realize who I am as a son of God. And—

Jon: Mmm. Okay. Because this is about sonship, here?

Tim: Exactly. The whole theme is about how we realize that we are children of God.

Jon: All right.

Tim: This is fantastic. So it's a passage like this that led an early Christian Bible nerd, who eventually became a bishop in the ancient coastal city of Caesarea in the mid-300s, a guy named Basil of Caesarea—he's awesome.

[Jon laughs]

Tim: He used his family inheritance to start what many scholars argue is the first real concept of a nonprofit hospital—

Jon: Hmm.

Tim: —as a sick house that took care of people and did surgery for free.

Jon: Hmm. Wow.

Tim: He's an amazing human being. He was also really smart—

[Jon and Tim laugh]

Tim: —and he was a Bible nerd. And he wrote this work on the Holy Spirit that was arguably the most influential kind of first full clarification about the trinitarian identity of the Spirit. At least, it became really persuasive to people after him. It's a rad little book. You can read it in an afternoon. It's more like an essay. There's one section that's fantastic. He puts it this way. He says, "So how is it the case that if the Father and the Son are each one, that there aren't two gods?"

Jon: Yeah.

Tim: "How are one and one one and not two?"

Jon: [chuckles] Mhm.

Tim: He says, "Well, think of it this way. Let's say you speak about a king and then a king's image, like a statue of the king."

Jon: Okay.

Tim: [Jon backchanneling throughout] "You're not talking about two kings," he says. "Their majesty is not divided into two, is it? The honor and the glory is not divided. We're talking about the honor and glory of one king, but there are two things in front of you. There's the king, and then there's the image of the king. The sovereignty and authority that they have over us, it's one. And the praise that we might give is not plural, but it's

one. Because the honor that you give to the image passes on to the—he calls it “the prototype.” That would be the living—you know, like, the human king. Then he begins to apply this to the Father and the Son. He says, “What in the one case is the image, by reason of imitation, that, in the other case, the Son is by nature.” What he’s saying here is: This analogy is breaking right now. [laughs]

Jon: Right. The statue is just an imitation.

Tim: Exactly. Yeah.

Jon: But the Son is the nature of God.

Tim: Exactly.

Jon: Okay.

Tim: Yep, that’s right. Yeah. So he goes on to say, “The Holy Spirit is also one. And we speak of him as one, being co-joined to the one Father through the Son and through himself completing the lovable and blessed Trinity.” [chuckles] By “lovable,” he doesn’t mean like cuddling—

[Jon chuckles]

Tim: —you know, a teddy bear. But they are a community of love that is rightly to receive our love and devotion. And then he has this really interesting illustration. He says, “Think of it this way. Think of how when you fix your eyes on the image—we’re back to the statue image. He says, “If we fix our eyes on an image, how is it that we are seeing the image? It’s through light. Light shining on the image that reflects off the image and makes it visible to us.”

Jon: Mhm. Okay.

Tim: And so he says, “Similarly, by means of the power that enlightens us, we fix our eyes on the beauty of the image of the invisible God. And through that image, we are led up to the supreme beauty of the spectacle of the archetype, which is with us inseparably in the Spirit of knowledge, himself bestowing on them the love and vision of the truth of beholding of the image.” I’m kind of paraphrasing here. So he’s got this three-part image of: There’s an image, and the image is a visible [chuckles] incarnation of something that is, like, above and transcendent and beyond, but is real—

Jon: Yeah. I think I see what he’s doing here.

Tim: Yeah, something helping you see the image. Yeah. Yeah.

Jon: Yeah, the light?

Tim: Yeah.

Jon: [Tim agreeing throughout] Yeah. So he's saying: You could have a king and his image. They're two, but they're one. All right, this metaphor breaks down with Jesus, because an image or a statue—it's a fabricated, inauthentic—what's the word he uses? Uhm—

Tim: A statue is only an imitation of a king or of—

Jon: It's just an imitation. Yeah. Just imitating the king.

Tim: That's right, yeah.

Jon: Where the Son of God is not imitating. It truly is an image—

Tim: Yeah. Mhm. A living, breathing—yeah.

Jon: In some way.

Tim: Yeah. [laughs] Whatever that means, yeah.

Jon: [laughs] But now we have a category of two things that are distinct but really then for the glory of one thing. Now that you have a little corner of your brain to try to comprehend that little paradox—

Tim: Something that is one and one and one.

Jon: Yeah.

Tim: [laughs] Yeah.

Jon: *"Let me throw one more thing into the mix."* And he uses this metaphor of light.

Tim: Yeah, that's right.

Jon: So how can we perceive this at all? It's because of light bouncing off the statue into our eyes.

Tim: Spotlight shining out.

Jon: And so what if that light—metaphor is going to break down again. That light's an impersonal—

[Tim laughs]

Jon: Those are protons or whatever.

[Tim laughs]

Jon: [Tim agreeing throughout] But like, what if we put into that category spirit, which actually is not just some impersonal energy, is actually truly God, but in a mode that we can encounter. And now you have all three.

Tim: Yeah. There you go. Good job.

Jon: Okay.

Tim: Yeah. You could have written the essay. [laughs]

Jon: [laughs] Well, no, I mean, I just—I could try to explain the essay. [laughs]

Tim: [laughs] You're trying to explain the essay. Yeah, that's what he's—so notice, he's actually using kind of biblical imagery and thought, that God is light.

Jon: Right, and the image.

Tim: Yeah, he quotes from a Psalm that we call Psalm 33, just in a few sentences, saying—it's a psalm where the poet says to God, "By your light, O God, we see light."

Jon: Mmm. Yeah.

Tim: Like "We wouldn't see anything if you didn't enable us to exist and see something." So he's saying the Spirit is the one who helps us see what is ultimately true about the Son. And in coming to see the Son, we come to see the one of whom the Son is the eternal image.

Jon: Mhm.

Tim: Mhm. So he's using biblical thought and language, but he's giving a level of clarity and distinction that Paul and John—

[“City Sunset” by Lofi Sunday feat. Marc Vanparla fades in]

Tim: —and Jesus just—

Jon: Kind of take for granted.

Tim: Take for granted and do it more poetically.

Jon: Yeah.

Tim: And it's as if Basil's trying to give a little more analytic or abstract clarity to it—

Jon: Right.

Tim: —which, depending on your personality, you might just prefer the poetic version—

[Jon and Tim laugh]

Tim: —you know? But it's interesting.

Jon: Yeah.

Tim: It's really interesting.

[Musical break: "City Sunset" by Lofi Sunday feat. Marc Vanparla (45:20-45:52)]

[Layers of Meaning in the Trinity (45:52-58:29)]

Jon: You know, the thing that lands for me the most is coming from our God series that we referenced, which is: Why am I trying to simplify the nature of God?

["City Sunset" by Lofi Sunday feat. Marc Vanparla fades out]

Jon: [Tim backchanneling throughout] God is one. We believe that there is one creator God, but then when I interact with that God, or for God to interact in itself, himself, that self, how am I [pause] going to try to pretend to really understand the nature of that? And the Hebrew Bible, in a great way, just kind of messes with those categories.

Tim: [chuckles] Mhm.

Jon: Not in a clean way.

Tim: Yeah, sure.

Jon: [Tim agreeing throughout] In a more poetic way of the *ruakh* of God, the wisdom of God. And so that feels really comfortable to me. And so when you get to the New Testament, if you're already comfortable with that, I think the thing that becomes kind of novel is, "*Oh, we're just landing on three. Why not the sevenfold nature of God?*" You know? [laughs]

Tim: Yeah, yeah, yeah. [laughs] Sure. Yeah. That's right.

Jon: But—

Tim: Yeah.

Jon: —we interact with God as three.

Tim: Mhm. Yeah. And the three—it's not arbitrary.

Jon: It's not arbitrary.

Tim: What Christian theology has done is it's looked to the language of Jesus and the Apostles. And the pattern you see in the language of Jesus and the Apostles is all of the hyperlinks to Hebrew Bible texts about God's word and wisdom and name and angel that all play with the distinction of one God and distinct from God—all those get hyperlinked on—

Jon: And assigned to Jesus.

Tim: To Jesus.

Jon: Yeah.

Tim: And then the nature of the Spirit in the Hebrew Bible, which is a little less clear or forward in that distinction between God and Spirit of God—it's subtle, but it's not there as loud as it is in these—

Jon: Okay. With, like, wisdom—

Tim: God's name and wisdom. Mhm.

Jon: Okay.

Tim: That carries forward into the New Testament, and the primary pattern of language about God in the New Testament is three. It's Father, Son, and Spirit. And onto the Son go all of these things that in the Hebrew Bible were connected to name and wisdom and word. That's why the Christian tradition has landed on three. So that's all I meant was: It's not arbitrary.

Jon: Yeah.

Tim: We're trying to respond to just Jesus and the Apostles.

Jon: Right.

Tim: [Jon backchanneling throughout] And we're allowing their words to put pressure or guidelines for: How—what does it mean to speak Christianly about God that uniquely reflects how God has revealed God's self in the story of the Bible that comes to fulfillment through Jesus and Pentecost? And all three of those are really vital to make up why it is Christians talk about God the way that they do. Trinitarian Christians. So there are elements of the Christian tradition that couldn't go there with the Spirit, or they

couldn't go there with the Son. And this is the rise of all these different kind of variants that, for lots of different reasons, never became the majority form of Christianity. But they have existed, and many of those forms still exist today.

Jon: Yeah.

Tim: So I think—I didn't want to complete a theme series on the Spirit of God—

Jon: Without addressing the Trinity.

Tim: Without addressing—yeah, that's right. Because the trick, then, is, like: Well, okay, let's say that Christians throughout history gained or developed increasing clarity about how to talk about God's identity. It's not like *God* was changing. If God is Trinity, God has always been Trinity.

Jon: Uh-huh.

Tim: There's never been a time when God wasn't Father, Son, and Spirit. So what Christians then began to do is go back and say, "*Well, let's reread the whole Bible with that level of clarity.*" Right?

Jon: Yeah.

Tim: And that's where you get conversations in all of Christian history about: Well, where's the Trinity in Genesis 1 and 2? You know, then that raises the question of original meaning. What do we mean by original meaning?

[Jon and Tim chuckle]

Tim: [Jon agreeing throughout] And I think there's one level to say: Well, what did a Second Temple Jewish reader think about God and the Spirit of God in Genesis 1, and then speaking a word? And you're like, "*Whoa, that's kind of crazy. God created the Heavens and the Earth. The Spirit is hovering in the waters. God speaks a word.*" And you're like, "*Father, Spirit, Son.*" And there's one layer to which I think, like: Yeah, that's to read the Bible as a Christian. That's what it means. But I think it's good to recognize that also the way the ideas developed throughout time—it's important to name that too. Like, how did clarity about God develop in this language of this tradition? And to me, it's important to honor both of those claims alongside each other. I just might be working out my own personal issue, but it's been helpful for me to think about those as kind of different layers of meaning in how we interpret these texts.

Jon: [Tim agreeing throughout] Yeah. [pause] You're saying: If you're reading Genesis 1 and you're reading the Trinity into the word of God, the Spirit of God, and then Father God, you could do that. And then your question is—describes who composed that—were they thinking of the Trinity explicitly? And maybe not, you're saying?

Tim: That's what I'm saying.

Jon: Okay.

Tim: Mhm.

Jon: I think where it becomes even more evident is in the image of God poem.

Tim: "Let us make"—

Jon: Make God in our image—

Tim: Oh, yeah. Right.

Jon: And many, many Christians say the "us" is the Trinity.

Tim: Yeah. Right. Right.

Jon: And it's very likely that the "us" is the divine council—

Tim: Yep, yeah.

Jon: —in the minds of those who composed that.

Tim: Mhm. Yeah, you could call that, like, a first layer of meaning.

Jon: Yeah.

Tim: A first context of meaning.

Jon: And you're just saying there's space for both of that?

Tim: Yeah, that's right.

Jon: Okay.

Tim: Mhm. Yeah, that's what I'm saying. [laughs]

Jon: Yeah.

Tim: So to me, that has been a, uhm, long labor—

[Jon laughs]

Tim: —of processing and some hard work to reach where I can say that and feel like that's an intellectually honest, coherent thing to say. And there are many people who don't have to do any work at all, and they're totally comfortable saying that, and that's fantastic. High five.

[Jon and Tim laugh]

Tim: But I know lots of people for whom this question is a little more challenging, and something about the Spirit and language about the Spirit in the Bible raises this issue for people in my experience in a way that's a little bit different.

Jon: Oh: *"Is the Spirit in the Hebrew Bible always meant to be considered another person or not?"*

Tim: Exactly. Yeah. So God, by definition is, while present because he's sustaining everything that I've ever experienced, is also above and beyond all.

Jon: Yeah.

Tim: The Son, I confess, as a Christian, is God becoming human or God the Father sending the Son to become human for our world and on our behalf. That happened 2,000 years ago.

Jon: Right.

Tim: So—

Jon: I can't go and, like, hang out with the resurrected Jesus right now.

Tim: Nuh-uh.

Jon: That's not a thing I can do.

Tim: So the logic of these passages in John and in Paul and the language about the Spirit is to say: Okay, but when I want to talk about the presence of God that I experience right now—like, right now, I'm breathing. Someone's giving me life right now that I didn't make for myself and my whole life and everybody else. How do you want to name that one? And is that one just an energy? Or is that one the very person of God?

Jon: Yeah.

Tim: And that's what trinitarian language about the Spirit is equipping me to do, is to say: I am encountering the Spirit of God. What the Spirit is telling me is that Jesus is my brother. [laughs] Like, he—in terms of: He's a human—

Jon: Yeah.

Tim: —which means that I am a son of God through grace and generosity like he is the Son of God by eternal nature. And he shared that with me.

Jon: Yeah. And—but it's more than just an idea, right? It's, like, something so intimate that then Jesus will say, "And I will be in you, and you will be in me."

Tim: That's it. Yes, yeah.

Jon: Right?

Tim: Jesus is in me by the Spirit—

[Jon and Tim laugh]

Tim: —of the Son being in me.

Jon: [laughs] Yeah.

Tim: And I—

Jon: And because he's the Son loved by the Father, then now we're all in the Father.

Tim: Totally. But the Spirit is the way to name not just something transcendent, above and beyond, not just something that happened in the past for me. It's the one I'm encountering in this moment right now. I am sustained and shown the truth of who I really am, a loved son of God. Who is it that is showing me that? And how did I come to realize that, and how am I constantly reminded of that every time I open myself to it? It's the Spirit, the person of the Spirit.

Jon: Mmm.

Tim: I think that's what this language is—it's experiential. It's the way I encounter God every moment in a personal, tangible way as I take a breath to say these words I'm saying to you. That's the Spirit in the Bible.

Jon: Hmm.

Tim: It's *so* beautiful. But it's also so mysterious, which is why we're, what, fourteen hours in—

Jon: Mhm.

Tim: —and there's part of me, and I know part of you, that's like: What are we talking about again?

[Jon and Tim laugh]

Jon: [chuckles] Yeah. Yeah, exactly.

Tim: [chuckles] But also there's a sense in which I don't know what I'm talking about, but I also—I do know, but I know it in a way that's hard to put into words.

Jon: [exhales] Yeah.

Tim: And it's not something I've always known. I didn't come out of the womb having the set of convictions about myself and Jesus and who God is, and—

Jon: And you're saying that growing in knowledge is a work of the Spirit?

Tim: Mhm. Yeah, or as Basil would say: It's me opening my eyes to the light the Spirit is shining on Jesus. Yeah. Helping me see.

Jon: Yeah. Okay.

[BibleProject theme song by TENTS]

Jon: Spirit of God.

Tim: Spirit— [laughs] the Spirit of God. [chuckles]

[Musical break: BibleProject theme song by TENTS (55:58-56:04)]

Jon: That's it for today's episode of BibleProject podcast. Next week will be a question-and-response episode working through these ideas about the Spirit of God one more time. BibleProject is a crowdfunded nonprofit, and we exist to help people experience the Bible as a unified story that leads to Jesus through the Spirit. Everything that we create is free because of the generous support of thousands of people just like you. Thank you so much for being a part of this with us.

[Phone beep]

Jessie: Hi, my name is Jessie, and I'm from Medford, Oregon.

Carsten: Hi, my name is Carsten, and I'm from Peachland, British Columbia. I first heard about the BibleProject at a summer camp. They use it to teach us some really awesome stuff about the Bible.

Jessie: I first heard about BibleProject at my church, and I use BibleProject for expanding my questions and answers that I have that come from the Bible.

Carsten: I use the BibleProject all the time for personal studies if it's something I want to learn a bit more about.

Jessie: My favorite thing about BibleProject is podcast and the Classroom.

Carsten: We believe that the Bible is a unified story that leads to Jesus.

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[Phone beep]

Shawna: Hi, my name is Shawna Quezada. I am from Richmond, Virginia, and I work as a technical project manager in our internal tech-ops team. Coming to BibleProject felt like I was coming to a smaller organization than I had been at. But the care that was being taken, how we handled data, felt like a much larger organization. And I feel it comes from just valuing human creativity that we've been given. BibleProject is a puzzle. It's a bunch of people coming together to make a really beautiful bigger picture. There's a whole team that makes the podcast come to life every week. For a full list of everyone involved, check out the show notes wherever you stream this podcast and on our app. Thanks, everyone!

[BibleProject theme song by TENTS fades out]

[BibleProject sonic logo]