

KIDS Stay for Prayer -- Sony...

Welcome guests. Intro... Today, we begin

New Series –God in Us: Understanding the Holy Spirit

Holy Spirit... Spectrum... {Neglect <<<<< _____ >>>>>Overemphasis)

Neglect: We praise the Father, Son and Holy Bible. The Forgotten God (Chan)

Overemphasis: We talk so much about the Spirit, we forget the Spirit came to point us to Jesus!

This series is about increasing our knowledge and understanding of the Holy Spirit. This is so important as we focus on living EMPOWERED lives this year. Why? We will always be tempted to experience a power without prioritizing a person, but God, we're not interested in the stuff you do more than who you are.

“Who is the Holy Spirit?”

John 14:15-26; 15:26-27

T: I want you to listen carefully to the words of John 14:25-26 & 15:26-27. Then I am going to give you six theological truths we learn from these words about the Holy Spirit.

John 14:15-26; 15:26-27 (text displayed)

1. The Holy Spirit is our Helper. (14:15-16)

Jesus continues teaching his disciples on the night before he was crucified. [That's why John 13-17 is known as “The Farewell Discourse.”]

- He begins by telling the disciples that they will prove their love for him by obedience, following his words and ways.
- Then Jesus promises in verse 16: “And I will ask the Father, and he will give you another Helper, to be with you forever.”
- Verse 17 clearly states: this Helper is none other than the Holy Spirit. Two quick observations...
 1. We should not hear Jesus saying that we merit the gift of the Spirit through our love and obedience.
 2. There is some irony here when we zoom out in the gospel of John. The Helper, the Spirit of truth, helps are those who are born again by the Spirit. Jesus says this in John 3: “No one will see the kingdom of God, unless they are born again.” Nicodemus: “What?!?” Jesus: Flesh gives birth to flesh (babies!); Spirit gives birth to spirit. (Echoing Ezekiel 36:27). If you believe in Jesus, he has sealed the salvation of your soul with the gift of his Spirit!

But what does it mean that the Spirit is our Helper?

- The Greek word for Helper is *Paraclete*. It is used four times in John's Gospel, once in 1 John, and nowhere else in the NT. The word *paraclete* literally means, “one called along side.” No one word sufficiently communicates all the Spirit is and does for us. That's why some translations just say “Paraclete” instead of “Helper.” Others say “Comforter” or “Counselor” or “Advocate.”
- Helper is pretty good as we consider all the ways the Spirit supports us in our journey as followers of Christ.

But don't miss that Jesus says: “another Helper.”

- There is an unmistakable continuity between the ministry of Jesus and the ministry of the Holy Spirit.
- Just as Jesus was a teacher who walked alongside, counseled, comforted, strengthened and encouraged his disciples, now the Spirit CONTINUES his ministry.

- The Spirit is “another Helper” who will walk alongside them **FOREVER!** If you have God’s Spirit, he will NEVER leave you, another indicator of God’s undying, covenant love for his children. (Perseverance of the Saints)

How frequently do you intentionally access the HELP of God’s Spirit?

T: When you need help, go to the Helper! #2

2. The Holy Spirit is a Person. (14:16-17, 26)

Because we cannot see the Spirit, we may be tempted to think of him as an impersonal force, but the Spirit is NOT an impersonal force that magically appears like in a Star Wars or Marvel movie. He is a person who relates to us like a friend.

Verse 17 tells us the Helper is a knowable.

- Jesus says “the Spirit of truth WHOM the world cannot receive, because it neither sees HIM nor knows HIM.” (Cf. 1 Cor 6:19; Eph. 1:13-14)
 - The “world” refers to people who reject God’s love and his gift of salvation in Christ.
 - The opposite is true for the disciples: “But you know him... [Just as you’ve seen the Spirit indwelling me, as your Counselor, when he comes to you, you’ll recognize him because he will keep doing the things you’ve seen in me!]”
- The intelligent, intentional work of the Holy Spirit displays his personhood.
 - In John’s Gospel we see: the Spirit is with us (14:17); the Spirit of truth (17) teaches us and reminds us (26); He testifies (15:26); convicts (16:7-11); and communicates with us (16:12-15).
 - Elsewhere in the NT: He can be grieved (Ephesians 4:30) and resisted (Acts 7:51). He empowers us (Acts 1:8; also Zech 4:1-6), communicates specific assignments according to his will (Acts 13:1-3; 1 Corinthians 12:11), prays on our behalf (Rom. 8:26), and much more.

To relate to the Spirit personally is so important, especially as we seek to live empowered lives through the spiritual gifts. We are not calling on some magical force. We are being strengthened by our constant companion!

T: The Holy Spirit is a person, and...

3. The Holy Spirit is God. (14:16-17)

When we say the Holy Spirit is in us, we are saying GOD IS IN US! Why? Because the Holy Spirit is God!

The deity of the Spirit is implied here in John 14 & 15.

- He is “another Helper,” one like Jesus. If Jesus is divine, the Spirit must also be divine.
- Additionally, the Spirit will be with us forever, implying what Hebrews 9:14 makes explicit: his eternity. The Spirit has always existed and will always exist!
- And, in 15:26 the Spirit is called “the Holy Spirit.” Who is inherently holy but God alone?

This evidence is all over the Bible. Here are two of my favorite places to visit:

- When Ananias and Sapphira deceitfully conspired to keep back some of the proceeds from their land: **“But Peter said, “Ananias, why has Satan filled your heart to lie to the Holy Spirit and to keep back for yourself part of the proceeds of the land? While it remained unsold, did it not remain your own? And after it was sold, was it not at your disposal? Why is it that you have contrived this deed in your heart? You have not lied to man but to God.” (Acts 5:3-4)** Pretty clear, no?

- The Great Commission: **And Jesus came and said to them, “All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit.” (Matthew 28:18-19)** Is the Spirit given equal status as God the Father and God the Son? No doubt about it! When we display our new identity in Christ, we are declaring we have a new life, new identity, and that we bear a new name - no longer living for ourselves but covered in the name of God the Father, God the Son, and GOD THE HOLY SPIRIT!

And if that wasn't enough, we see the Spirit is sovereign (John 3 - “blows where he pleases”), omnipresent (Psalm 139:7 - “Where can I go from your Spirit?”), omniscient (1 Corinthians 2:10; “the Spirit searches everything”), and omnipotent (1 Cor. 12:4-6).

T: The Holy Spirit is God, and the Holy Spirit is also our...

4. The Holy Spirit is our Teacher. (14:17, 25-26)

Jesus first describes the Spirit as “the Spirit of truth” in verse 17. Jesus just declared a mere 11 verses earlier in John 14:6: “I AM the Way, the TRUTH, and the Life.” In same way, the Spirit is full of Truth. He speaks and embodies truth.

Additionally, Jesus says in verse 25-26, that the Spirit will teach us ALL THINGS (not all possible knowledge but everything essential for godly living) and bring to remembrance all Jesus said to his disciples.

As you walk with God day by day, we hear his voice in two primary ways:

- First, we have the words of God contained right here, in God's *Spirit* inspired Word (cf. 2 Timothy 3:14-17; 2 Pet 1:20-21). God's truth comes to us through the words of Scripture.
- Second, we should not limit the Spirit's teaching to ONLY the words of Scripture. Why? Logically, we know that not every disciple wrote Scripture inspired words. This promise includes the completion of the canon of Scripture but is not limited to it. Practically, we know that he continues to guide us and teach us and remind us and convict us in regards to righteousness (16:8) every single day, always in alignment with the truth previously revealed in Scripture.

Aren't you amazed by this promise of personal intimacy that comes as his Spirit provides that still small voice of instruction. As our ears hear a voice behind us (to quote Isaiah 30:20-21): “this is the way, walk in it!”

[[[“And though the Lord give you the bread of adversity and the water of affliction, yet your Teacher will not hide himself anymore, but your eyes shall see your Teacher. And your ears shall hear a word behind you, saying, “This is the way, walk in it,” when you turn to the right or when you turn to the left.” (Isaiah 30:20-21)]]]

T: This intimacy points us to our fifth truth:

5. The Holy Spirit is our Friend. (14:17-24)

- Jesus loves us too much to leave us alone. Verse 17: “You know him for he dwells with you (or lives with you) and will be in you.”
- This is true both collectively and individually. (Plural in verse 17 “will dwell with you (pl).” And singular in verse 23: “if anyone (sg)... we will come to him and make our home with him.”)}
- Jesus provides 3 metaphors for his intimate friendship with us.

1. Orphans

- Verse 18 (here's a promise!): “I WILL NOT leave us as orphans. I WILL come to you.”

- Few things have broken our heart over the past month more than to see 50% of the children of Ukraine displaced from their homes, millions flee as refugees, and who knows how many will become orphans as their parents tragically and unnecessarily die in the War. We should be ready to respond as God leads us, just as our “Wrap Around One” Foster Care Teams have done for our Foster Care Families of RHC.
- Each family and team provides a reflection of God’s love for us. HE WILL NOT LEAVE US ALONE! HE COMES TO US!

2. Union

- Verse 20 - “In that day, you will know that I am in my Father, and you in me, and I in you.”
- Can it get more intimate than completely united? He is in you. You are in him. “Mutual indwelling” or “Union with Christ”
- We are one with God through his Spirit living in us!

3. Home

- Verses 21-23
- Jesus says, “You’re not going to see me much longer, but don’t worry, my Father and I will come to you and “make our home with you.”
- From Genesis 1 & Garden of Eden to Rev 22 & the New Heavens and New Earth, God’s heart is to dwell with us! The fulfillment of Ezekiel 37:27 is here, not in full but in part: “My dwelling place shall be with them, and I will be their God, and they shall be my people.”

I used to answer the question: “How do you know if someone is full of the Spirit?” like this: “Fruit and Gifts.” I’m changing it: “Friendship, fruit and gifts.”

The Spirit’s presence in us is *discipleship continued*. Discipleship is always being with before doing for.

T: We walk with Jesus, by his Spirit, to live like Jesus. The Holy Spirit is our Friend. Finally...

6. The Holy Spirit points people to Jesus. (15:26-27)

Look at 15:26-27

- What is the Spirit’s role here? To bear witness, to testify on behalf of someone else. He is an Advocate.
 - In a world not naturally inclined to hear the message of Jesus, the Holy Spirit comes in and says, “Yes, all of this is true! Jesus is the Son of God. He lived a perfect life. He died in your place on the cross. He rose from the grave on the third day. He is inviting you to experience his life and love!”
 - But how does he do it? This is WILD!! He does it through our words. This Spirit testifies in our testimony.
 - Verse 26 - the Spirit will bear witness.
 - Verse 27 - you also will bear witness.
 - The juxtaposition of the statements implied the Spirit’s testifies in our testimony.
 - And this is exactly what Jesus says elsewhere in places like Mark 13:11, 1 Corinthians 2:6-16, and 1 Thess 2:5 (“because our gospel came to you not only in word, but also in power and in the Holy Spirit.”)

If you are in Christ, if you have been changed by God’s grace, you have a story to tell.

It does not have to be complicated or even difficult. Look at what Jesus says in verse 27. "And you also will bear witness, BECAUSE YOU HAVE BEEN WITH ME from the beginning."

- Have you been with Jesus? Talk about it. Has Jesus given you a little help this week? Talk about it! Has Jesus put some peace in your heart or hope in your bones? Test-i-fy!! Has Jesus given you a power to love and serve people, when everyone else is saying: "Be selfish! Serve yourself." That's right. You got a TEST-A-MO-NEE (Ralph West s/o)!
- It's as if Jesus is saying, "You've been with me... how could you not talk about me?!"
- It's always intimacy and then ministry. Worship then mission. Love then love!

This is the forgotten backdrop to Acts 1:8... "You're going to testify and be my witnesses WHEN YOU RECEIVE POWER by the HOLY SPIRIT coming upon YOU!"

What a great opportunity, this Easter season, to intentionally reach out to *at least* one person in our life and point them to Jesus.

Who will be that one person in your life? Who will you invite for Easter? To whom will you tell your story?

T: John 14 & 15 teach us...

The Point: The Holy Spirit is God, our Helper, Teacher, and Friend.

Our Helper is ready to help us! Your Helper is ready to help you!

Conclusion:

At Parker's middle school, they have an hour window in the middle of the day where they eat lunch for 30 minutes and then can choose 30 minutes of either "stretch," a place to socialize and exercise with their friends or go to "Academic" where their teachers are available in their classrooms to HELP them with their school work. Guess how many students access "Academic"? That's right... NOT MANY.

This is how we are so often with God, the Holy Spirit! The difference is that we have 24/7 access to his help! The difference is, he's so gracious, he helps us even when we don't consciously ask!

We're going to sing a song asking God to pour out his Spirit on us in a fresh way. We are going to ask for more of his presence and power to be seen in us. More of his help, more of his teaching, more of his friendship in our lives!

What is your greatest need this morning? Where do you need the Helper's help? Let's ask God, right where we are... (salvation... fresh start...)