

Sermon Series: *The Person & Work of the Holy Spirit*

Another Helper To Be With You Forever

John 14:15-24 (ESV)

15 “If you love me, you will keep my commandments. **16** And I will ask the Father, and he will give you another Helper, to be with you forever, **17** even the Spirit of truth, whom the world cannot receive, because it neither sees him nor knows him. You know him, for he dwells with you and will be in you.”

18 “I will not leave you as orphans; I will come to you. **19** Yet a little while and the world will see me no more, but you will see me. Because I live, you also will live. **20** In that day you will know that I am in my Father, and you in me, and I in you. **21** Whoever has my commandments and keeps them, he it is who loves me. And he who loves me will be loved by my Father, and I will love him and manifest myself to him. **22** Judas (not Iscariot) said to him, Lord, how is it that you will manifest yourself to us, and not to the world? **23** Jesus answered him, If anyone loves me, he will keep my word, and my Father will love him, and we will come to him and make our home with him. And the word that you hear is not mine but the Father's who sent me.”

The Farewell Discourse

The passage before us this morning takes place in the final hours of the time Jesus had with His disciples. These words were spoken on the night of Jesus’ arrest, the day before His crucifixion. Jesus’ final words to His disciples are contained in John chapters 13-17. This body of Scripture is often referred to as the Farewell Discourse or the Upper Room Discourse.

Five times during this discourse, Jesus teaches specifically about the Holy Spirit (Jn 14:16-17, 26; 15:26-27; 16:7-11). The text before us this morning is the first time in the Farewell Discourse that Jesus begins to unfold a greater understanding of the Person and Work of the Holy Spirit. Since we are yearning to draw nearer to the LORD during these days, it seems right that we take the time to study what Jesus said and taught about the Holy Spirit. Getting to know Holy Spirit IS getting to know Jesus.

The Context Is Love

Jesus speaks about the Holy Spirit from within a context of love. In chapter 13 Jesus had demonstrated His own love for the disciples by humbly washing their feet and then giving them a “new” command to love one another by following His example. He then turned the focus of His teaching on their love for Him.

The whole passage is wrapped in love. This paragraph begins with love (v. 15) and ends with love (v. 24) for Jesus personally. The theme of love dominates this entire section of Scripture. “The word ‘love’ occurs eight times in 14:15–24.”¹ Jesus begins by stating positively what love for Him looks like and then concludes by stating negatively what the lack of love for Him looks like.

¹ Andreas J. Köstenberger, *John*, Baker exegetical commentary on the New Testament (Grand Rapids, Mich.: Baker Academic, 2004), 434 footnote 64.

John 14 (ESV)

15 *"If you love me, you will keep my commandments. (This is restated in v.21)*

24 *Whoever does not love me does not keep my words.*

Love Is Obedience

Jesus notes, rather as a matter of fact, that love for Him naturally expresses itself in obedience to His commands. Jesus states this as a certainty. *"If you love me, you **will** obey my commands."* Obeying Jesus' commands is not a condition of earning His love, but the means whereby His disciples demonstrate *their* love for Him. The same is true for us. Jesus does not command us to obey Him in order to earn His love, but He simply says that the person who loves Him will obey His commands. Conversely, the person who does not love Jesus will not obey Him. Obedience, then is the clearest metric of love for Jesus.

This statement that Jesus makes is incredibly strong—"If you love me, then you will obey Me." Jesus is saying this is what love means—obedience. Love for Jesus is not primarily warm feelings for Him in the pit of your stomach. Love for Jesus is not merely an occasional prayer before a meal. Love for Jesus is not giving away your money or going on humanitarian trips to far away places. You can say that you love Jesus all day long but if you do not obey Him, then you do not love Jesus in the way that He expects His followers to demonstrate their love for Him. Love for Jesus is demonstrated by obedience to His commands. If you love Him, then you will obey Him.

I can say I love my wife, but if I do not obey the promises that I made on my wedding day—to love her, comfort and cherish her, honor and keep her, in sickness and in health; forsaking all other women and to be faithful to her alone until one of us dies—if I do not obey those promises, then I really do not love her, do I?

Jesus very clearly expect love to shown by obedience to His commands.

I Love You When I'm Near You, But When I'm Not Near You...

If I were one of the disciples, the question that would be running through my mind would be, "But Jesus you know how weak-willed and sinful we are. How can You be so sure that we will obey You? When I'm with you I want to obey but when I'm away from You I often give in to my sinfulness. And you are talking about going away to a place where we cannot follow you, so how will I be able to desire to obey You when You are no longer here? I can't do this without some help."

And as if Jesus knows my thoughts, He goes on to say, "I know. I will provide for you everything you need in order to obey Me. In fact, I'm so certain that you will obey me, because I will put my own Spirit within you. I'm making a New Covenant with you. I will give you a new spirit."

John 14:16-18 (ESV)

16 *And I will ask the Father, and He will give you another Helper, to be with you forever, 17 even the Spirit of truth, whom the world cannot receive, because it nether sees him nor knows him. You know him, for he dwells with you and will be in you. 18 I will not leave you as orphans; I will come to you."*

In these three verses, there are eight truths that Jesus teaches about the Holy Spirit.

1. The Holy Spirit is Given at the Request of Jesus.
2. The Holy Spirit is Given as a Gift from the Father.
3. The Holy Spirit is Another Helper.

4. The Holy Spirit is Given Forever.
5. The Holy Spirit is the Spirit of Truth.
6. The World Cannot Receive the Holy Spirit.
7. The Holy Spirit Dwells Within Jesus' Disciples.
8. The Holy Spirit Is the Spirit of Jesus.

1. The Holy Spirit Comes at the Request of Jesus (v.16)

The first truth about the Holy Spirit is that only Jesus has the authority and the right to give the Holy Spirit to anyone. We saw this last week in **John 7:37-39** where Jesus on the last day of the Feast of Tabernacles stood up and shouted,

John 7:37-39

"If anyone thirsts, let him come to Me and drink. 38 Whoever believes in Me, as the Scripture has said, 'Out of his heart will flow rivers of living water.'" 39 Now this he said about the Spirit, whom those who believed in him were to receive, for as yet the Spirit had not yet been given, because Jesus was not yet glorified.

When will Jesus send the Holy Spirit? After His resurrection and ascension to the Father in heaven. After the glorification of Jesus was completed on this earth and He took His seat at the right hand of God the Father, then Jesus would do as He said,

John 14:16 (ESV)

"I will ask the Father, and He will give you another Helper."

Jesus was certain that the Father would answer His request. And indeed He did. This promise was fulfilled at Pentecost, which took place fifty days following Jesus' crucifixion. Jesus asked the Father for permission to pour out His Holy Spirit upon all flesh and this was accomplished in Jerusalem and explained by Peter in Acts chapter 2. Jesus asked the Father for the Holy Spirit to be sent and the Spirit was given. God answered the request of Jesus.

2. The Holy Spirit is Given as a Gift from the Father (v.16)

Jesus said the Father would give the Holy Spirit. The Holy Spirit is **given** as a gift, not earned as a wage. Who can receive this gift? Jesus answered this in John 7:38 by saying *"whoever believes in Me."* He answers that question here in the passage this morning (Jn 14:15) by saying that the Holy Spirit is given to those who love Him.

Those who **believe** in Jesus do so because they **love** Jesus. They **trust** in Him because they **treasure** Him. These are the people who receive the Holy Spirit. All who trust and treasure Jesus will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit. Whoever believes receives. Whoever believes in Jesus receives the Holy Spirit. And Luke 11:13 tell us that the Holy Spirit is **THE** greatest gift in the world that ever be given and we all we have to do is simply ask.

Luke 11:13

If you then, who are evil, know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more will the heavenly Father give the Holy Spirit to those who ask Him!"

Trust Him. Treasure Him. Ask Him.

3. The Holy Spirit is Another Helper (v.16)

The third truth about the Holy Spirit is that He is “another Helper” (ἄλλον παρακλητον [*allon paraklēton*]), which implies that the disciples already had a “helper.” To have “another” of anything is to add to what one already possesses. If I buy another bag of M&M’s, the implication is that I already have at least one. So the fact that Jesus will ask for ‘another’ helper means they already had a “helper.”

In Greek, there are two words for “another,” *allon* (ἄλλον) and *heteron* (ἕτερον). The former can mean “another of like kind,”² while the latter means “another of a different kind.”³ The Helper whom Jesus would request from the Father would be **“another” helper ‘of the same kind’** as the helper they already had. The question is who was the “helper” who was already with them?

The word for ‘helper,’ *paraklētos*, will assist us in answering that question. The word *paraklētos* has been variously translated as ‘Advocate,’ ‘Helper,’ ‘Counsellor’ (as in ‘legal counsellor,’ “not ‘camp counsellor or marriage counsellor’”⁴), ‘Comforter,’ ‘Teacher,’ and ‘Guide.’⁵ *Paraklētos* literally means, “one called along side to help and was used of a legal advocate”⁶ and “may also refer to a mediator or intercessor.”⁷

Who had been to the disciples an advocate, helper, counsellor, comforter, teacher, guide, mediator, and intercessor? Clearly Jesus had. So Jesus was saying to the disciples, “I will send you ‘another helper’ who is just like Me. He will be to you just as I have been to you.” Jesus was to the disciples the original *paraklētos*, the original Helper, and now He was promising to send “another Helper.”

This understanding of Jesus as the first *paraklētos* is further supported in John’s first epistle. John uses the word in a direct reference to Jesus in 1 John 2:1.

1 John 2:1

My little children, I am writing these things to you so that you may not sin. But if anyone does sin, we have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous.

“The coming of the Counsellor was to replace Jesus’ physical presence, and the Counsellor would do for the disciples after Jesus’ departure what Jesus had done for them before it.”⁸

Jesus had been an encouraging, strengthening, teaching, protecting, guiding presence in the lives of the disciples and now He was promising to send another “Helper,” only *this* Helper would be better

² A.T. Robertson, *Word Pictures in the New Testament* (Oak Harbor: Logos Research Systems, 1997), Jn 14:16.

³ Marvin Richardson Vincent, *Word Studies in the New Testament* (Bellingham, WA: Logos Research Systems, Inc., 2002), Jn 14:16.

⁴ D. A. Carson, *The Gospel According to John* (Leicester, England; Grand Rapids, Mich.: Inter-Varsity Press; W.B. Eerdmans, 1991), 499.

⁵ Colin Kruse, *The Tyndale New Testament Commentary, Volume 4: John* ed. Leon Morris (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 2004), 304.

⁶ D. A. Carson, *New Bible Commentary : 21st Century Edition*, 4th ed. (Leicester, England; Downers Grove, Ill., USA: Inter-Varsity Press, 1994), Jn 14:1–31.

⁷ Frank E. Gaebelin, Merrill C. Tenney and Richard N. Longenecker, *The Expositor's Bible Commentary, Volume 9: John and Acts* (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan Publishing House, 1981), 146.

⁸ Kruse, 305.

than Jesus Himself. Jesus was about to die and leave the disciples. However, the Helper Jesus was going to send would never leave them, which leads us to the fourth truth about the Holy Spirit.

4. The Holy Spirit is Given Forever (v.16)

The fourth truth about the Holy Spirit is that when He is given, He is given forever. Once you receive the Holy Spirit He never leaves. Never. ***“I will ask the Father, and He will give you another Helper, to be with you forever.”*** You cannot receive the Holy Spirit and then lose Him. He does not come into your life for a little while and then leave you. Once He comes, He remains forever! FOREVER!

Receiving the Holy Spirit is what it means to be a Christian. You cannot be a Christian without the Holy Spirit (**Rom 8:9** *Anyone who does not have the Spirit of Christ does not belong to Him*). So no one is a Christian for a while and then is not a Christian. Once the Holy Spirit is given to you, He never again leaves you—ever! The Holy Spirit is THE greatest gift you could ever receive and He is the greatest gift you can never lose!

This promise is not based upon the righteousness of the person receiving the great gift, but based upon the righteousness of the One making the request, which is Jesus. The eternal presence of the Holy Spirit in the life of the believer is guaranteed not because of *our* holiness but because of *His* holiness. The Holy Spirit is with us forever not because of what we do, but because of what *He* has already done - which is perfectly obeying the Father in His life, sacrificially shedding His blood in His death, victoriously rising from the dead and ascending into heaven to be a *paraklētos*, an advocate for us before the father (1 John 2:1).

Certainly Jesus expects that His disciples will obey Him. So what we do is not unimportant, but the reason Jesus can be certain that His disciples will obey Him is because of the presence of the Holy Spirit in their lives. Obedience is not optional, but neither is it a prerequisite for receiving the Spirit. He is called the “Holy” Spirit because He works holiness in the lives of those in whom He dwells. He is not the “unholy” spirit.

Holy Spirit is given as a gracious gift without respect to any merit in the one who receives the gift. Once God gives His Holy Spirit, He never takes His Spirit back. Jesus had been with the disciples for three years and was about to leave them. However, when the Holy Spirit would come, He would never leave them. When the Holy Spirit comes into a person’s life, He never again leaves.

This might be *THE* most wonderful blessing of being born on this side of Pentecost. Prior to Pentecost this was not the case. The Holy Spirit was not given to anyone forever under the Old Covenant. He came upon people for certain tasks, for certain amounts of time, but He did not remain forever. He came upon Saul, but after Saul’s disobedience He left Saul. He came upon Samson, but following Samson’s disobedience He was removed from him. However, Jesus fulfilled all righteousness, therefore He, and only He, has the authority to give the Holy Spirit forever to those who **trust** Him and **treasure** Him and **ask** Him for the great gift of His own personal, Holy Spirit. This is how Jesus can keep His promise *“to be with you forever to the end of the age”* (Matt 28:20).

“The gift of the Holy Spirit once given is never taken away.”⁹

⁹ Kruse, 305

5. The Holy Spirit is the Spirit of Truth (v.17)

The fifth truth about the Holy Spirit is that Jesus says He is “the Spirit of Truth.”¹⁰ The Holy Spirit is defined by what is true. There is no falsehood in Him and He never lies. Notice how similar He is to Jesus. Remember what Jesus said about Himself in **John 14:6**, “*I am the way, the truth, and the life. No man comes to the Father except through Me.*” There are many characteristics that Jesus and the Spirit have in common and truth is one of them.

In fact, Jesus says that truth is one of the motivating aspects in the direction of the Holy Spirit. Jesus will tell the disciples in just a few verse following this,

John 16:13

When the Spirit of truth comes, he will guide you into all the truth...

One of the roles of the Holy Spirit is to help the followers of Jesus to discern what is true from what is false. We need to lean into this aspect of His influence in our lives. When we believers have an internal sense that something is wrong and not true, then we need train ourselves to sniff out the difference between what is true and what is false. Pray that the Lord will make you more keenly discerning between what is true and what is false.

We should also note that since He is the “Spirit of Truth,” He is very well able to tell when He is being lied to. You cannot lie to the Holy Spirit, so don’t try to. Be honest with Him. When you are talking to Him, tell Him the truth, for it is impossible for Him to be lied to, so be honest with Him.

6. The World Cannot Receive the Holy Spirit (v.17)

The sixth truth that Jesus reveals about the Holy Spirit is that “*the world cannot receive Him, because it neither sees Him, nor knows Him.*” I find this a frighteningly sobering statement. The natural condition that every human being finds himself or herself in, apart from God, is that of being completely bereft of the of the Spirit of God. The natural state of the human heart is not one of neutrality toward God, but of enmity.

Romans 8:5-7

5 For those who live according to the flesh set their minds on the things of the flesh, but those who live according to the Spirit set their minds on the things of the Spirit. 6 To set the mind on the flesh is death, but to set the mind on the Spirit is life and peace. 7 For the mind that is set on the flesh is hostile to God, for it does not submit to God's law; indeed, it cannot.

Apart from the gift of the Holy Spirit our minds are completely unable to submit to God. We in our sin simply “cannot.”

1 Cor 2:14

The natural person does not accept the things of the Spirit of God, for they are folly to him, and he is not able to understand them because they are spiritually discerned.

The “natural person” finds “things of the Spirit of God” completely unacceptable. To the “natural person” the spiritual things of God is total foolishness. The reason is because the “natural person” loves all the wrong things.

¹⁰ See also John 15:26; 16:13; 1 John 4:6.

1 John 2:15

Do not love the world or the things in the world. If anyone loves the world, the love of the Father is not in him.

The disciples needed to be reminded of this truth. Every person in their natural condition is spiritually dead to God (Eph 2:1) and has absolutely no interest in anything spiritual that has to do with the Creator of this world nor His glorious Son. Seeing is not believing. The ancient world saw Jesus and they did not embrace Him as Messiah-Savior; they thought He was a demon from hell (Jn 8:48) and they nailed Him to the cross.

The truth is that spiritually dead people have no inclination toward the things of God whatsoever. Their hearts are inclined in the exact opposite direction. In and of ourselves we do not have the means necessary to receive the Holy Spirit. This is why salvation (giving and receiving the Holy Spirit) is decisively a work of God's sovereign grace.

Augustine said, "For worldly love possesseth not those invisible eyes, whereby, save in an invisible way, the Holy Spirit cannot be seen."¹¹ Fleshly eyes cannot see spiritual things. Only spiritual eyes are able to behold the beauty of spiritual things. It is the work of the Holy Spirit to give us those spiritual eyes, but **the world cannot receive the Holy Spirit**.

7. The Holy Spirit Dwells Within Jesus' Disciples (v.17)

The seventh truth about the Holy Spirit that Jesus reveals is that the Holy Spirit will dwell within the disciples. Even though the world does not know the Holy Spirit, Jesus says to His disciples, "You know Him, for He dwells with you and will be in you."

Jesus noted that the Spirit was already present dwelling *with* the disciples but later, after Jesus had ascended to the Father, after Pentecost, then the Spirit would dwell *within* them. After Pentecost, the Holy Spirit would take up residence *within* the disciples. He would not merely be *with* them, but He would be *in* them. He would dwell in them in a uniquely individual way. He would relate to them in a way in which He had not previously related to them before.

This is true of every true believer today. "The individual indwelling of the Spirit is the specific privilege of the Christian believer (see John 7:39)."¹² This privilege was purchased by the blood of Jesus and this privilege has been enjoyed by every true believer since that day. This is the remarkable difference between the Old Covenant and the New Covenant that Jesus effected through His death, resurrection, and ascension.

8. The Holy Spirit Is the Spirit of Jesus (v.18)

The final truth that Jesus reveals about the Holy Spirit is that the Holy Spirit is the Spirit of Jesus. Having the Holy Spirit dwell within you is to have the Spirit of Jesus dwell within you. Jesus says in,

¹¹ Phillip Schaff, *Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers of the Christian Church*, Vol. 7, St. Augustine, *Homilies on the Gospel of John*, Tractate LXXIV, chapter XIV. 15-17 (Grand Rapids, Eerdmans, 1888). Source www.ccel.org/ccel/schaff/npnf107.iii.lxxv.html?scrBook=John&scrCh=14-14&scrV=16-16#iii.lxxv-p2.1 accessed 14 May 2011.

¹² Frank E. Gaebelin, Merrill C. Tenney and Richard N. Longenecker, *The Expositor's Bible Commentary, Volume 9: John and Acts* (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan Publishing House, 1981), 147.

John 14:18

I will not leave you as orphans; I will come to you.

Jesus connection to and identification with the Holy Spirit was so great, that when the Spirit comes Jesus could say, “I will come to you.” Having the Holy Spirit dwell within you is the same as having Jesus dwell within you.

This truth is confirmed elsewhere in Scripture. In Acts 16:6-7 the terms “the Holy Spirit” and “the Spirit of Jesus” are used interchangeably. In Romans 8:9 Paul refers to the Holy Spirit as “the Spirit of Christ” and so does Peter in 1 Peter 1:11. In Gal 4:6 He is referred to as “the Spirit of His Son.” In Phil 1:19 the Holy Spirit is called “the Spirit of Jesus Christ.”

The Holy Spirit is the same spirit as the Spirit of Jesus. To have the Holy Spirit within you is to have the Spirit of Jesus within you. It is through the indwelling presence of the Holy Spirit that we come to have an individual and personal relationship with Jesus. Jesus says at the end of verse 20, “...you in Me, and I in you...”

And at the end of verse 21 we see that it is through the indwelling presence of the Holy Spirit that we experience a greater understanding and intimacy with Jesus. In that verse Jesus says, “...I will manifest myself to him.” It is the function of the Holy Spirit to draw us deeper and deeper into an ever-growing intimacy with the person of Jesus. In fact, having the holy Spirit dwell within, brings one into complete union with all three persons of the Trinitarian Godhead. Jesus says when the Holy Spirit comes,

John 14:20-21 (ESV)

20 In that day you will know that I am in my Father, and you in me, and I in you. 21 Whoever has my commandments and keeps them, he it is who loves me. And he who loves me will be loved by my Father, and I will love him and manifest myself to him.

The presence of the Holy Spirit in our hearts, unites us not only with Jesus but also with the Father. What an incredible mystery! “I am in My Father, and you in Me, and I in you.”

Who can participate in this wonderfully mysterious union with Jesus and God the Father? The answer is anyone who loves Jesus.

John 14:23-24

*23 Jesus answered him, “If anyone loves me, he will keep my word, and my Father will love him, and we will come to him and make our home with him.
24 Whoever does not love me does not keep my words. And the word that you hear is not mine but the Father's who sent me.”*

Through the gift of the indwelling presence of the Holy Spirit of Jesus God is able to make Himself a home in our hearts. Having your heart be a home for God is possible through trusting and treasuring Jesus. God is at home with anyone who loves Jesus.

Do you love Him? Do you trust Him? Are you treasuring Jesus? If you desire to know Him more, then obey His commands. He will manifest Himself to those who love Him. Those who truly love Him will obey Him. But do not depend upon your own strength to do this. Trust in the Helper whom Jesus sent to be with you forever. Trusting the Helper is trusting Jesus.