
“Promised Helper”

JOHN 16:7-15

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**Disclaimer: I did not preach from this transcript. Rather, I wrote an outline based on my transcript. If you read it while listening to my sermon, it could be frustrating or confusing. I recommend one or the other, or at different times. If I had to guess, my preached sermon will contain about 75% of this written sermon. Both can be useful and I pray the Lord uses them for your personal edification! – Pastor Brian*

BOTTOM LINE UP FRONT

It was devastating for the disciples to see Jesus go, but it was necessary for Him to send the Holy Spirit to us.

I cannot imagine the pain and uncertainty the disciples experienced when Jesus ascended to Heaven after His resurrection. Knowing they would face these feelings, Jesus prepared the disciples before His crucifixion. He told them it was necessary for Him to go away and send the promised helper, the Holy Spirit. It was actually to their advantage that He go away and send the Helper, Jesus said. The Holy Spirit is with us now, dwelling within every born-again believer. He does so much to encourage, equip, protect, and guide the lives of His people. Thank you, Jesus, for fulfilling not only the Genesis 3:15 promise, but also the promise to send the Helper.

INTRODUCTION

Jesus was with His disciples in the Upper Room the evening He was betrayed and arrested. He had washed the disciples' feet and broken bread with them. Judas has gone to do what Satan put into his heart to do. Jesus' time is very short. He is about to leave His disciples. He will return Sunday and will continue to appear to them over the course of about 40 more days. But this evening marks a turning point in their relationship. Their daily experience with Jesus has come to an end.

Like a parent leaving for a long trip who seeks to comfort anxious children, Jesus could tell they needed His consoling words before He left. He genuinely loved His disciples and wanted to reassure them that He was not leaving them like orphans. (cf. John 14:18). Thus, He told them that even though He would be leaving them, He would send the **Helper** to them.

JOHN 16:7-15

7 Nevertheless, I tell you the truth: it is to your advantage that I go away, for if I do not go away, the Helper will not come to you. But if I go, I will send him to you. 8 And when he comes, he will convict the world concerning sin and righteousness and judgment: 9 concerning sin, because they do not believe in me; 10 concerning righteousness, because I go to the Father, and you will see me no longer; 11 concerning judgment, because the ruler of this world is judged. 12 “I still have many things to say to you, but you cannot bear them now. 13 When the Spirit of truth comes, he will guide you into all the truth, for he will not speak on his own authority, but whatever he hears he will speak, and he will declare to you

the things that are to come. 14 He will glorify me, for he will take what is mine and declare it to you. 15 All that the Father has is mine; therefore I said that he will take what is mine and declare it to you.

TO YOUR ADVANTAGE

Let's look at **verse 7** **Nevertheless, I tell you the truth: it is to your advantage that I go away, for if I do not go away, the Helper will not come to you. But if I go, I will send him to you.**

Jesus is responding to the sorrow that has filled the hearts of His disciples because He has just shared with them that not only is He going away, but they are about to experience some extremely difficult days of persecution even unto death. **Nevertheless**, Jesus says. In spite of what He has just told them. Despite the fact that they will be alone and they're going to suffer, there's something they should take comfort in.

Because Jesus in His humanity restrained Himself to time and space, it was to the **advantage** of His disciples then, and now, that He **go away** and send the **Helper**, the Holy Spirit, that disciples might experience His presence and power with us always, everywhere. While it was terribly upsetting and disheartening for his disciples to witness what was about to take place, it was better for them because **if [He] did not go away, the Helper [would] not come.**

Andreas Köstenberger, in his commentary writes, "Rather than hold up God's purposes, the crucifixion actually will expedite it. For, by eschatological necessity, the Spirit cannot come unless Jesus has first been exalted. Since the work of atonement must first be accomplished for Jesus to be 'glorified,' and since the paraclete [Helper] represents the presence of Jesus, Jesus by definition must depart before the Spirit can be given. Only through the internal presence of the Spirit will the disciples truly understand Jesus."

THE BASIC ROLE

Jesus continues in **verses 8-11** laying out the basic role of the Holy Spirit in the lives of His disciples. In **verses 8-9** Jesus says, **And when he comes, he will convict the world concerning sin and righteousness and judgment: concerning sin, because they do not believe in me;** There is really only one question when it comes to sin and judgment. Do you believe in Jesus? If you have a saving faith in Jesus, then your sin is atoned for in full. Your debt is completely paid. But to reject Jesus in this life will result in judgment in the next.

Thankfully while you still have breath, the Holy Spirit's work regarding sin is **conviction**, not judgment. **He will convict the world concerning sin...** Conviction of the Holy Spirit is intended to lead you to repentance and confession, not guilt and shame. Our default status as sinners is to reject Jesus, to not believe in Him. Thus, we need the Holy Spirit to convict us of our sin in order to bring us to repentance and belief in Jesus.

Jesus continues in **verse 10, [he will convict the world] concerning righteousness, because I go to the Father, and you will see me no longer;** The Holy Spirit will not only convict of sin, but He will also lead us in paths of **righteousness**. "But if Christ is in you, although the body is dead because of sin, the Spirit is life because of righteousness. If the Spirit of him who raised Jesus from the dead dwells in you, he who raised Christ Jesus from the dead will also give life to your mortal bodies through his Spirit who dwells in you." Romans 8:10-11 He will guide, inspire, & transform Jesus' disciples as they align their legal standing with their lived experience – those declared righteous by the Father are made righteous by the Holy Spirit. The justified will be sanctified.

EVIDENCE OF SAVING FAITH

This is evidence of a saving faith, the Holy Spirit is making you more like Christ. There is increasing righteousness in your life. You have come to hate sin you once loved. You are being convicted of sin regularly and are increasing in your love for Jesus and His Word and the people that make up His church.

Since Jesus is not here to walk beside His disciples like He did for three years, He sent the **Promised Helper, the Holy Spirit** to do that. The Holy Spirit uses the Word of God to bring change to the life of a born-again believer. In 2 Timothy 3:16-17 we read, “All Scripture is breathed out by God and profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, and for training in righteousness, that the man of God may be complete, equipped for every good work.”

Jesus said in **verse 11, concerning judgment, because the ruler of this world is judged**. By walking in obedience to the Father all the way down the Calvary Road and enduring the cross, Jesus satisfied the full cup of God’s wrath and simultaneously secured the judgment of **the ruler of this world**. “Now is the judgment of this world; now will the ruler of this world be cast out. And I, when I am lifted up from the earth, will draw all people to myself.” He said this to show by what kind of death he was going to die.” John 12:31-33 In Genesis 3:15 language, He crushed the head of Satan. His judgment is secure and final. It is as good as done.

TOO MUCH TO BEAR

This was obviously too much for His disciples to handle because in **verses 12-13 “I still have many things to say to you, but you cannot bear them now. When the Spirit of truth comes, he will guide you into all the truth, for he will not speak on his own authority, but whatever he hears he will speak, and he will declare to you the things that are to come.**

Jesus was aware the disciples were already overwhelmed by what was happening and would soon be completely overcome with grief. What He has shared with them thus far will have to do. They **cannot bear the many things [He still had] to say**. He would instead wait for the Holy Spirit to come. Then the full truth of the Gospel, Jesus’ life, death, resurrection, all of that would finally be evident.

Jesus said, **He will guide you into all the truth** because like a journey into the expansive wilderness, they would need a guide to navigate where they were being led. Guides are a lifeline on expeditions. You don’t climb Mount Everest without a Sherpa. Likewise, no one navigates life faithfully without the guidance of the Holy Spirit.

THE HOLY SPIRIT IS A HE

Something important for us to note here. When John wrote what Jesus said, **When the Spirit of truth comes**, John used the gender-neutral term *pneuma*, Spirit. Then when Jesus transitioned to pronouns, we would expect John to use the gender-neutral pronoun, “it.” Many people make this mistake, calling the Holy Spirit, “it.” **When the Spirit of truth comes, [It] will guide you into all truth**. This is an error. The Holy Spirit is not an “it” the Holy Spirit is a “He.”

This is significant because the Holy Spirit is not like the “Force” in Star Wars. The Holy Spirit is a personal entity. The Godhead is personal. That is why the New City Catechism asks, “How many persons are there in God?” And answers, “There are three persons in the one true and living God: The Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit. They are the same in substance, equal in power and glory.”

They are the same in substance, equal in power and glory, yet the Holy Spirit willingly submits Himself to the mission of Jesus and the will of the Father. Though He is equal in power, **He will**

not speak on His own authority. Rather He serves as an agent of communication between the Father and Son to His people. He will only **speak** what **He hears**.

HE WILL GLORIFY ME

Though they are equal in glory, Jesus says in **verse 14 and 15, He will glorify me, for he will take what is mine and declare it to you. All that the Father has is mine; therefore I said that he will take what is mine and declare it to you.** There is absolute & perfect unity in the Godhead.

Jesus promised, **“But if I go, I will send him to you.”** He fulfilled that promise and we read of that moment in Acts 2:4 “And they were all filled with the Holy Spirit and began to speak in other tongues as the Spirit gave them utterance.” The first act of the Holy Spirit was to supernaturally impart the ability to speak the Gospel in languages the Jewish disciples had never learned. Many foreigners, called proselytes, had come to Jerusalem to celebrate Pentecost, or the Feast of Weeks, 7 weeks after Passover. Shavuot commemorated the giving of the Torah, the Pentateuch, the first five books of our bible, the Mosaic Law.

A NEW PENTECOST

Interesting that on the day of Pentecost, which commemorated the day in which Israel committed to being God’s set apart people in the wilderness, the Holy Spirit descended and 3000 people from all over the region would be set apart from among the Jews and be born-again at the preaching not of the Law, but of the Gospel. And not just in Aramaic or Hebrew, but in their native tongues! There’s lots to unpack there, huh?

Thank you, Jesus for not abandoning us but for fulfilling the promise to send the Helper. Let’s spend the rest of our time today considering what the Bible teaches about the work of the Holy Spirit in our lives. I’ve identified ten things He does. I’m sure I have not exhausted the list.

I think first and foremost we need to recognize that God’s Spirit speaks what He hears and when He first came, He put the Word of God in the mouths of His people. Then He inspired the authors of the New Testament to recall what Jesus said and to write the scriptures we call the New Testament.

THEY KNEW THEY WERE WRITING SCRIPTURE

Even the authors of the New Testament recognized they were writing scripture on the same level as the Old Testament. The Apostle Peter said this about Paul’s writings, “just as our beloved brother Paul also wrote to you according to the wisdom given him, as he does in all his letters when he speaks in them of these matters. There are some things in them that are hard to understand, which the ignorant and unstable twist to their own destruction, as they do the *other Scriptures*.” 2 Peter 3:15-16

So, just as Jesus said, the Holy Spirit would **guide you into all the truth** and in John 14:26, “He will teach you all things and bring to your remembrance all that I have said to you.” How did we get the teachings of Jesus found in the Gospels? And the exhortations and prophecies in the New Testament letters?

THE HOLY SPIRIT INSPIRED THE AUTHORS TO WRITE THE NEW TESTAMENT

The Holy Spirit inspired the authors to write the New Testament “For no prophecy was ever produced by the will of man, but men spoke from God as they were carried along by the Holy Spirit.” 2 Peter 1:20 This is why we declare that the Word of God, the scriptures of both the Old and New Testaments are inerrant, infallible, authoritative, and sufficient for life and faith. He speaks only what He hears and He gave that to the authors of the New Testament. Furthermore, the Spirit

of God takes the Word of God and uses it to produce in us the life of God. We call that sanctification and more specifically, the fruit of the Spirit.

THE HOLY SPIRIT WORKS IN US, PRODUCING THE FRUIT OF THE SPIRIT

“But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, self-control; against such things there is no law.” Galatians 5:22-23 Notice it is not “fruits” of the Spirit, but “fruit” in the singular. There are many gifts of the spirit, but only one fruit. And the fruit is characterized by these attributes. Evidence that we are filled with the Holy Spirit is increasing measure of these attributes. Not perfect in any, maybe not even perfectly balanced. Yet, as we survey our life since our conversion, we see the evidence of the Holy Spirit increasing these attributes in our lives.

THE HOLY SPIRIT UNITES BELIEVERS

The unity brought by the Holy Spirit is revealed in Acts 4:32 where it says: “All the believers were united in heart and mind. And they felt that what they owned was not their own, so they shared everything they had.” It was the Holy Spirit that brought about this kind of unity. We should strive for and ask the Holy Spirit to grant this kind of unity in the church, difficult though it may be.

One thing the first church had that tends to unite a diverse group of people was a common purpose and a common adversary. They immediately began to face backlash because they were vocal about what they had witnessed with their own eyes, the resurrection of Jesus.

THE HOLY SPIRIT GIVES BOLDNESS TO DECLARE THE GOSPEL IN THE FACE OF ADVERSITY

Yet the Holy Spirit gave them power & boldness to declare the Gospel in the face of adversity. Jesus told the disciples after His resurrection, and before He ascended to Heaven, “But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes on you, and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth.” Acts 1:8

They did so and, again, they faced pushback immediately. As early as Acts 4, we read of the Apostles Peter and John being brought before the Jewish council who charged them never to speak in the name of Jesus. John and Paul went back to the people and they prayed for boldness to continue to speak. “And when they had prayed, the place in which they were gathered together was shaken, and they were all filled with the Holy Spirit and continued to speak the word of God with boldness.” Acts 4:31

How could they pray such a prayer? They were commanded by the authorities to stop disrupting the city with their teaching. Intimidation. Threats. Charges. Why didn’t that stop the church? Because “God has not given us a spirit of fear and timidity, but of power, love, and self-discipline.” 2 Timothy 1:7

When do you obey and when do you not? When do you press and when do you flee? Whose guidance do you embrace and whose do you reject? What should be the priorities of the Church? If the last two years has taught the church anything, it’s that this is a question that requires discernment and wisdom, which incidentally is another gift the Holy Spirit supplies.

THE HOLY SPIRIT GIVES WISDOM AND DISCERNMENT

Yet among the mature we do impart wisdom, although it is not a wisdom of this age or of the rulers of this age, who are doomed to pass away...these things God has revealed to us through the Spirit...Now we have received not the spirit of the world, but the Spirit who is from God, that we might understand the things freely given us by God. 1 Corinthians 2:6, 10, 12

Sometimes we're so perplexed and so confused we don't even know what to ask for. Have no fear, the Holy Spirit helps with that, too!

THE HOLY SPIRIT INTERCEDES FOR US WHEN WE DO NOT KNOW HOW TO PRAY

The Holy Spirit intercedes for us when we do not know how to pray. "Likewise the Spirit helps us in our weakness. For we do not know what to pray for as we ought, but the Spirit himself intercedes for us with groanings too deep for words. And he who searches hearts knows what is the mind of the Spirit, because the Spirit intercedes for the saints according to the will of God." Romans 8:26-27 Let that settle in just a bit. The Spirit of God is praying on our behalf. He searches our hearts and brings that before the Father. Sometimes the best we can do is say, "Lord, I need your help" and He knows. And He cares. He cares not just for you individually; He also cares for the church and wants to build it up.

THE HOLY SPIRIT GIVES GIFTS FOR THE EDIFICATION OF THE CHURCH

The Holy Spirit gives gifts for the edification of the Church. "To each is given the manifestation of the Spirit for the common good. For to one is given through the Spirit the utterance of wisdom, and to another the utterance of knowledge according to the same Spirit, to another faith by the same Spirit, to another gifts of healing by the one Spirit, to another the working of miracles, to another prophecy, to another the ability to distinguish between spirits, to another various kinds of tongues, to another the interpretation of tongues. All these are empowered by one and the same Spirit, who apportions to each one individually as he wills." 1 Corinthians 12:7-11

Time does not permit us to expound upon the topic of gifts of the Holy Spirit. There are two basic schools of thought, continuationists who believe the Holy Spirit continues to supply the church with sign gifts, and cessationists, who believe the Holy Spirit stopped giving the sign gifts with the Apostles. Regardless of what gifts the Holy Spirit gives and whether the church should expect to receive sign gifts, all gifts of the Holy Spirit, to include the gifts of mercies, giving, healing, helping, administration, preaching and teaching, all are to be exercised in love of Jesus and others and with an aim of building up the body of Christ. (cf. 1 Corinthians 13 & Ephesians 4:11-16)

No matter where you stand on sign gifts, the first gift of the Holy Spirit is the gift of regeneration. The first thing the Holy Spirit does in a person's life is wash them in renewal of regeneration. He makes the dead come to life!

THE HOLY SPIRIT BRINGS SPIRITUAL LIFE TO SPIRITUALLY DEAD HEARTS

"But when the goodness and loving kindness of God our Savior appeared, he saved us, not because of works done by us in righteousness, but according to his own mercy, by the washing of regeneration and renewal of the Holy Spirit, whom he poured out on us richly through Jesus Christ our Savior." Titus 3:4-6

Hallelujah, what a Savior! We are not saved because we do good things for God, but according to His own mercy through the Holy Spirit, whom He poured out on us richly through Jesus Christ. Is that not a wonderful, beautiful, amazing thing? Our Father is not stingy with anything He gives. Nor is He willing that we should forget who and whose we are. Prone to wander, we might need to be reminded from time to time of our identity in Christ.

THE HOLY SPIRIT REMINDS US OF OUR IDENTITY

"For all who are led by the Spirit of God are sons of God. For you did not receive the spirit of slavery to fall back into fear, but you have received the Spirit of adoption as sons, by whom we cry, 'Abba! Father!' The Spirit himself bears witness with our spirit that we are children of God..." Romans 8:14-16

Do you need a reminder today? Have you come weary today? Have you come forgetful today? The Holy Spirit is the seal of our salvation, like a seal of authenticity...

“In him you also, when you heard the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation, and believed in him, were sealed with the promised Holy Spirit” Ephesians 1:13

He lives to constantly remind us of our new relationship with our Heavenly Father. And He invites us to walk in that relationship where we will find life and peace.

THE HOLY SPIRIT BRINGS LIFE AND PEACE

“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. For to set the mind on the flesh is death, but to set the mind on the Spirit is life and peace.” Romans 8:5-6

I don't know where you are in Christ this morning. I don't know if you have a vibrant relationship, a strained relationship, a presumptuous one, or none at all. But you probably do. It is my prayer that every person in this church or watching online comes to experience the presence and power of the precious promised Helper, the Holy Spirit.

He is our guide in times of uncertainty.

He is our comforter in times of grief.

He is our helper in times of need.

He is the seal of our salvation.

He gives us the power to stand firm in the Gospel and works in us the godliness that leads to life and peace.

He is the very presence of God in us.

Jesus promised, **“But if I go, I will send him to you.”** Jesus, you fulfilled that promise and we give you thanks.