

GOSPEL OF JOHN

Encounter Jesus – The Son of the Living God

Your Holy Presence Living in Me

We are in the middle of studying Jesus' final words to His disciples. Our former pastor, Mark Smith, entitled a recent sermon series on these chapters, The Farewell Discourse. Sometimes these chapters are called the Upper Room Discourse, named for the location of the disciples and Jesus' final meal together before His crucifixion. I like to think of these chapters as a long and loving conversation Jesus had with His disciples that is still speaking to His disciples today. There is so much to learn from these passages that these short lessons can only be a summary of the things Jesus said. The TOW Project comments, "It is important to recognize that Jesus' words are not a dispassionate lecture. He is in anguish for the disciples whom He loves, and whom He must soon leave and His words are designed above all to comfort them in their distress."

The New Testament places great emphasis on the power of the Holy Spirit working through Jesus. The Holy Spirit was the conceiving agent in the Virgin Birth of Jesus. At His baptism, the Spirit descended on Jesus in a form like a dove. Herschel Hobbs said that Jesus never worked a miracle until after the Holy Spirit came upon Him. This tells us that our own works will be futile unless we are directed by the Holy Spirit of God. Christians have a personal Helper. As the song so aptly says, This is the air I breathe, your holy Presence living in me. When we accept Jesus as Savior and Lord His Presence illumines our life, guides us, and never turns off His power in us even though at times we may feel as though His Power Source has been shut down. That is just our imagination – one of the devil's ways of stealing our joy.

As we pick up in Jesus' conversation with the disciples, we find Him speaking about love and His promise of the Helper who was to come!

Read John 14:15 (ESV) ¹⁵ *"If you love me, you will keep my commandments.*

Love is like oil to the wheels of obedience.

Paul wrote in **1 Corinthians 13:3 (ESV)** ³ *If I give away all I have, and if I deliver up my body to be burned, but have not love, I gain nothing.* Our world is constantly looking for evidence of love in the Christian community. Our words are not enough. Our profession of faith, our checking the 'Christian box' on a form is not real proof of our love for our Savior. The real proof comes when we do all of His will – His will as revealed in His Word. To those who love Him, Jesus, promises to give a Special Gift.

Read John 14:16-17 (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 neither sees him nor knows him. You know him, for he dwells with you and will be in you.*

The ESV describes Jesus' gift as the Helper. Helper is translated from the Greek word *parakletos* meaning one called alongside to help. Other translations use the words: Comforter, Advocate or Counselor.

Jesus had taught and helped His disciples personally up until now. As He prepared to make His way home, He promised that the Presence of the Spirit of God would come to the disciples and dwell in them, taking the place of His physical presence. Jesus called the Spirit *another Helper* – **meaning another of the same kind**. The Spirit of God is not different from the Son of God in essence, for both are God.

The background for this Greek term comes from the court of law where the Paraclete stood beside a client to help. Christ is our Paraclete or Advocate with the Father when we sin. *1 John 2:1 (ESV)* 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. This is not an encouragement to do wrong! But, instead is a wonderful comfort to know that we have an Advocate in heaven intervening on our behalf before the throne of God.*

Yes, the Holy Spirit is the believer's indwelling Advocate to help our ignorance and infirmity and to make intercession for us. What a blessing to have the Holy Spirit of God ever interceding for us to our Heavenly Father. *Romans 8:26-27 (ESV)* ²⁶ *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.* ²⁷ *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.* Even though Jesus was physically leaving His disciples, He promised a part of Himself would take up residence in the heart and life of each believer.

Read John 14:18-21 (ESV) 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."*

At times even Christians **feel** alone, abandoned, helpless, and hopeless! **But, we are not!** Wherever we go, the Holy Spirit of God is in us, so why should we feel like orphans? Many people have no blood family for a number of reasons and yet there is no need to **feel** alone, abandoned, helpless, and hopeless when we have the privilege of being the dwelling place for a portion of the Holy Spirit of God. His Spirit within us is our family connection to the LORD of Hosts.

The last time the world would see Jesus would be on Golgotha. After His death, Joseph of Arimathea and Nicodemus took Him from the cross and buried Him in a tomb. The resurrected Jesus did not reveal Himself to the world – only to those who believed. After the resurrection, Jesus was seen alive in a resurrected body on at least 12 separate occasions and by over 500 witnesses at one time. Ultimately,

believing Jesus physically rose from dead is a matter of faith. However, the facts support His resurrection.

The next time the world sees Jesus, He will come in power and great glory to judge lost sinners.

Revelation 1:7 (ESV) ⁷ *Behold, he is coming with the clouds, and every eye will see him, even those who pierced him, and all tribes of the earth will wail on account of him. Even so. Amen.*

Jesus said, *Because I live, you also will live* – The song Because He Lives says: Because He lives, I can face tomorrow – Because He lives, all fear is gone – Because I know He holds the future – And life is worth the living just because He lives. Matt Maher says, “Everything we do as Christians comes because of the resurrection. Because Jesus lives we therefore have life.”

It was the Spirit’s coming that would change everything for the disciples. *In that day you will know that I am in my Father, and you in me, and I in you.* That day would be the coming of the Spirit at Pentecost. Pentecost was a Jewish festival but more importantly it was the day the Holy Spirit came to earth to dwell in God’s children. It was the beginning of the oneness of the believers with our Lord. Even though we did not see Jesus in the flesh as the early disciples did, we are united to Him by the indwelling Holy Spirit. In other words, we have a portion of God’s Spirit within us!

Read John 14:22-25 (ESV) 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.* 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.* ²⁵ *“These things I have spoken to you while I am still with you.*

Naturally, the disciples had been looking forward to the appearance of the Messiah to the world. On more than one occasion Jesus had spoken of it. For example, Jesus had said in **Matthew 24:30 (ESV)** ³⁰ *Then will appear in heaven the sign of the Son of Man, and then all the tribes of the earth will mourn, and they will see the Son of Man coming on the clouds of heaven with power and great glory.* Judas (not Iscariot) was trying to understand why **only** the disciples would see Him. Could this be a change in the divine plan? There was not a change in the divine plan. They just had not completely understood the Old Testament prophecies concerning the coming of the Messiah.

Wiersbe explains, “Jesus had been rejected by His own people, so He could not reveal Himself to them. In fact, it was an act of mercy that He did not manifest Himself to the world, because that would have meant judgment. He has revealed Himself to His church and left the church in the world to be a witness of God’s love. He is patiently waiting, still giving lost sinners opportunity to repent and be saved.”

Read John 14:26 (ESV) ²⁶ *But the Helper, the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in my name, he will teach you all things and bring to your remembrance all that I have said to you.*

Sometimes when we read the New Testament accounts of Christ, we wonder how the writers were able to give such detailed and often word by word accounts. Jesus Himself answers this question for us. *But*

the Helper, the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in my name, he will teach you all things and bring to your remembrance all that I have said to you. Their minds would be illuminated by the Holy Spirit. They were going to be able to recall events about Jesus beyond their natural ability.

It is the same for us today. The Holy Spirit guides the new Christian just as the Holy Spirit guides the more mature Christian. The Holy Spirit guides the educated Bible scholar but also guides the simple reader of His Word. Through the power of the Holy Spirit we can do things for the kingdom of God that we never imagined possible.

Read John 14:27-29 (ESV) ²⁷ *Peace I leave with you; my peace I give to you. Not as the world gives do I give to you. Let not your hearts be troubled, neither let them be afraid.* ²⁸ *You heard me say to you, ‘I am going away, and I will come to you.’ If you loved me, you would have rejoiced, because I am going to the Father, for the Father is greater than I.* ²⁹ *And now I have told you before it takes place, so that when it does take place you may believe.*

Shalom—Hebrew for peace—is a precious word. Our God is the God of Peace – our LORD is Peace. In Jesus’ day the *Pax Romana* (Roman peace) was won and maintained by force. Real peace comes from a relationship with Jesus. **Philippians 4:7 (ESV)** ⁷ *And the peace of God, which surpasses all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus.*

Jesus would return to His disciples in two ways. First, He would come as the resurrected Christ, and second, He would come to them in the person of the Spirit. Going to His Father meant a lot to Jesus and the disciples were not really considering this. Like we so often do, they were thinking of themselves while barely considering the feelings of Jesus. They were so preoccupied with their own problems they were unable to rejoice with Jesus that He was soon to go home.

When I was growing up, I remember my mother trying to prepare me for things to come. Nine times out of ten, I did not want to hear what she had to say. Jesus had the same problem as my mother. His disciples were having difficulty understanding and accepting what He was saying to them. He knew coming events would be a shock. Explaining beforehand was His way of preparing them. He did not want their faith to be destroyed if events took them totally by surprise.

Read John 14:30-31 (ESV) ³⁰ *I will no longer talk much with you, for the ruler of this world is coming. He has no claim on me,* ³¹ *but I do as the Father has commanded me, so that the world may know that I love the Father. Rise, let us go from here.*

Jesus’ reference to the ruler of this world means Satan, whose coming would occur through the actions of Judas Iscariot and the Jewish leaders to whom Judas betrayed Jesus. While Jesus acknowledged that the plot of Satan meant that their time together would not be much longer, Jesus made it clear that Satan was powerless over Him when He said Satan *has no claim on me*. We are currently living in a time where we are being bombarded with the terrible results of the ruler of this world working through his minions on earth. Rejoice! God’s children can truthfully say like Jesus said: Satan has no claim on me!