

29. The Promised Holy Spirit

John 14:15-31

Warm-up Question: Can you think of a promise that was made to you as a child that was kept or not kept? How did that make you feel?

Alternative Question: Tell us about a schoolteacher that made a big impression on you, either good or bad.

I remember a time when I was probably around eight or nine years old, when I set my heart on a bedside lamp. It was a lamp that was made to look like an old sailing vessel, such as the ship that Christopher Columbus sailed on his journey to America. Its sails lit up when it was plugged in. It was awesome! I wanted that sailing boat lamp so much that I begged my step-mom to buy it for me. What sticks in my mind was the implicit promise that was given to me that my next birthday I would receive it. I kept the promise in my mind until my birthday, but was disappointed when my birthday arrived. No lamp. A reminder to all you parents out there, don't make a promise to a child that you cannot or will not keep. I clearly remember how I felt when I didn't get the promised lamp. Today we learn about a promise that God has made, and He does keep His promises.

¹⁵“If you love me, keep my commands. ¹⁶And I will ask the Father, and he will give you another advocate to help you and be with you forever— ¹⁷the Spirit of truth. The world cannot accept him, because it neither sees him nor knows him. But you know him, for he lives with you and will be in you. ¹⁸I will not leave you as orphans; I will come to you. ¹⁹Before long, the world will not see me anymore, but you will see me. Because I live, you also will live. ²⁰On that day you will realize that I am in my Father, and you are in me, and I am in you. ²¹Whoever has my commands and keeps them is the one who loves me. The one who loves me will be loved by my Father, and I too will love them and show myself to them.” ²²Then Judas (not Judas Iscariot) said, “But, Lord, why do you intend to show yourself to us and not to the world?” ²³Jesus replied, “Anyone who loves me will obey my teaching. My Father will love them, and we will come to them and make our home with them. ²⁴Anyone who does not love me will not obey my teaching. These words you hear are not my own; they belong to the Father who sent me. ²⁵“All this I have spoken while still with you. ²⁶But the Advocate, the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in my name, will teach you all things and will remind you of everything I have said to you. ²⁷Peace I leave with you; my peace I give you. I do not give to you as the world gives. Do not let your hearts be troubled and do not be afraid. ²⁸“You heard me say, ‘I am going away and I am coming back to you.’ If you loved me, you would be glad that I am going to the Father, for the Father is greater than I. ²⁹I have told you now before it happens, so that when it does happen you will believe. ³⁰I will not say much more to you, for the prince of this world is coming. He has no hold over me, ³¹but he comes so that the world may learn that I love the Father and do exactly what my Father has commanded me (John 14:15-31).

Setting the Scene

We are carrying on from the last passage, John 14:1-14, where Jesus and the eleven disciples were reclining around the table. Judas had already left the table to finish off his deed of betrayal (Matthew 26:14-16). As Jesus began to share His heart with the disciples I imagine them sitting cross-legged, hanging on every word as Jesus began to share some of the deepest teaching that they had ever heard. This heart to heart sharing by the Lord Jesus spans chapters thirteen to seventeen in John's gospel. He only had a short time left before the agony in the Garden of Gethsemane and the Crucifixion. He needed to prepare their hearts for the coming dark hours when it would seem to the disciples that all was lost, something that was very far from the truth.

The Promise of the Holy Spirit

Jesus promises that He will ask the Father and He will send “another advocate to help you and be with you forever—the Spirit of truth (Verses 16-17). What is a promise? It is a declaration or assurance that one will do a particular thing or that a particular thing will happen. This promise is given, not only to the disciples reclining around the table with Him, but to all who believe and put their trust in Christ. It is not to the “super saints”—the eleven who sat around the table were not extra-ordinary in any way. In fact, that was why they were chosen to be his apostles. They were just like you and me, ordinary people. They were so ordinary that after they were filled with the Spirit at Pentecost, the religious leaders were astonished. It says, “when they saw the courage of Peter and John and realized that they were unschooled, ordinary men, they were astonished and they took note that these men had been with Jesus (Acts 4:13). The disciples were chosen for the very fact that they were ordinary, unschooled men so that the glory and goodness of God could be made evident. This should encourage us all as we stop to consider what an all-powerful God can do with ordinary men and women such as you and I. Luke, the writer of the Gospel of Luke, clarifies this promise in his second book, the Book of Acts:

⁴On one occasion, while he was eating with them, he gave them this command: “Do not leave Jerusalem, but wait for the gift my Father promised, which you have heard me speak about (Acts 1:4).

Did you notice that Jesus called the coming of the Holy Spirit on the Day of Pentecost; “the gift that the Father promised”? What does one have to do to earn a gift? Absolutely nothing! Otherwise it would not be a gift. When a person is paid for working all week, does their boss give them their wages as a gift? Of course not! They worked hard to get what they deserved for working all week. Most of us reading these notes have a holiday at least once a year where gifts are given or exchanged. If a child were naughty the day before, would a gift still be given? Most of us would say, “Yes,” because a gift is not earned. A gift is not dependent on a person's behavior. The God we serve is a perfect Father who loves to give good gifts to His children, and it is not because they earned the gift:

³⁸Peter replied, “Repent and be baptized, every one of you, in the name of Jesus

Christ for the forgiveness of your sins. And **you will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit.** ³⁹The **promise is for you and your children and for all who are far off—for all whom the Lord our God will call**” (Acts 2:38-39).

God’s character is bound up in this promise, that all who receive forgiveness of sins will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit. The Holy Spirit is given not only to the eleven sat around the table, but to all their children who believe and to those in many far off lands who are also called to obey the gospel message. If you have heard the message of the gospel and sincerely believed and turned your life over to Christ, you were sealed with the promised Holy Spirit when you believed.

¹³And you also were included in Christ when you heard the message of truth, the gospel of your salvation. **When you believed, you were marked in him with a seal, the promised Holy Spirit,** ¹⁴who is a deposit guaranteeing our inheritance until the redemption of those who are God’s possession—to the praise of his glory (Ephesians 1:13-14).

The Paraklētōs

In the passage we are studying today, the One that the Father sends is called the *Paraklētōs*. This Greek Word describes the Holy Spirit and is translated in the New International Version as the *Advocate*, who will be with us forever. The King James Version translates *Paraklētōs* as Comforter. The word *Comforter* has changed significantly since John Wycliffe first used it in the first translation of the Bible from Greek into English. William Barclay, the commentator, says:

“The word comes from the Latin *fortis* which means *brave*; and a comforter was someone who enabled some dispirited creature to be brave. Nowadays *comfort* has to do almost solely with sorrow; and a comforter is someone who sympathizes with us when we are sad. Beyond a doubt the Holy Spirit does that, but to limit His work to that function is sadly to belittle Him. We often talk of being able to cope with things. That is precisely the work of the Holy Spirit. He takes away our inadequacies and enables us to cope with life. The Holy Spirit substitutes victorious for defeated living.¹

[Does this information change your view of the Holy Spirit? Share with one another your thoughts.](#)

The Greek word *paraklētōs* is found in the Bible only five times, and only in the New Testament. John’s gospel uses it four times (John 14:16, 14:26, 15:26, 16:7), and it is also used once in the First Letter of John (1 John 2:1). In ancient Hellenistic texts, the word *paraklētōs* was used to denote an advocate, but not in a professional sense as we use it today. It was used to describe a friend or patron who comes alongside a person to speak up for them when he or she is accused. When one reads the New Testament, the description of how the Holy Spirit comes alongside us is so varied that He cannot be

¹ The Daily Study Bible, William Barclay. The Gospel of John, Volume 2, Page 167. Printed by Saint Andrews Press.

called just an Advocate, Counselor or Comforter. One word to describe what He does limits Him in our minds. We should think of the *paraklētos* as our helper alongside of us, which is exactly how the New American Standard Version Bible (NASB) translates it. Now that Jesus was leaving the disciples, He comforts them by telling them about this Divine Helper. He is the One who gives us help in every situation, every trial. He is the Holy Spirit. He will give strength when we are weary (2 Corinthians 12:9). He will give insight when we are counseling someone. He will remind us of God's promises when we are in a tight spot (John 14:26). He gives encouragement when we are weary. He will speak through us when we are hauled before the judge for being a Christian (Luke 12:11-10).

I want you to stop a moment and consider the change that came over the disciples after they were filled with the Holy Spirit. Remember their demeanor at the trial of Jesus, how they were hiding in the shadows? Think of how Peter denied Jesus when confronted with the statement that he had been with Jesus. Yet now, we see boldness and bravery displayed. No longer are the disciples huddled together in the upper room, away from the world, searching for answers and trying to grasp what had happened. After Pentecost, they were sent back into the world. The Holy Spirit was sending them, with God's Word, back into the world and endorsing the message by accompanying the Word with His Spirit:

*²⁹ Now, Lord, consider their threats and enable your servants to speak your word with great boldness. ³⁰ Stretch out your hand to heal and perform signs and wonders through the name of your holy servant Jesus."³¹ After they prayed, the place where they were meeting was shaken. And they were all filled with the Holy Spirit and **spoke the word of God boldly** (Acts 4: 29-31).*

What changes do you see in the disciples before and after their experience in the Upper room?

One of the first things we should notice about the Helper, the Holy Spirit, is that He is called *another* Advocate (John 14:16). This word *another* means another of the same kind. He is like Christ—in fact, He is called the Spirit of Christ (Romans 8:9, 1 Peter 1:11). More than that, He is called the Spirit of Truth:

...the Spirit of truth. The world cannot accept him, because it neither sees him nor knows him. But you know him, for he lives with you and will be in you (John 14:17).

The Holy Spirit had been with them, but Jesus tells them that He shall be in them. This speaks of what would happen on the Day of Pentecost when the Holy Spirit would come upon the believers and empower them, baptizing them into the spiritual Body of Christ. He would reside in them, not just be with them. This thought that the Spirit had been with them could be:

1) A reference to the presence of Christ living with them as they went from place to place with Him, especially since it was written of Jesus that He had the Spirit without

measure (John 3:34).

2) The reference to the Spirit being with them could also be talking about the time He sent them out in ministry and He had given them authority and power to lay hands on the sick and cast out demons (Matthew 10:8, Luke 9:1-2). Their ministry of doing the works of Jesus was a result of the Spirit being *with* them, but as yet He was not *indwelling* them. The Spirit could only come into them as their hearts were purified by the finished work of Christ on the cross and their faith in that accomplished work (Acts 15:9).

Jesus then tells the disciples that when the *paraklētos* comes within them, as He did on the Day of Pentecost, from that point on the Holy Spirit would teach them and remind them of all things that Christ had taught them.

²⁶But the Advocate, the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in my name, will **teach you all things** and will remind you of everything I have said to you (John 14:26).

²⁷As for you, the **anointing** you received from him remains in you, and you do not need anyone to teach you. But as **his anointing teaches you about all things** and as that **anointing** is real, not counterfeit—just as it has taught you, remain in him (1 John 2:27).

Does that mean that we no longer need Bible teachers? What do you think? If we don't need teachers, what does it mean?

My personal belief when it comes to these two passages about the Holy Spirit teaching us all things is that the Spirit will give us awareness within as to what is right and wrong. There is a “know-so” within the core of our being. Paul the apostle wrote that the Spirit witnesses with our spirit that we are children of God (Romans 8:16). There is an “amen,” that resounds within when a person is confronted with the truth. A person may come to Christ with little knowledge as to who Jesus is, like a little child, but the Spirit will reveal truth as opposed to the lies of the enemy, even if a person does not have a copy of the Bible. Of course, we still need to be meditating on the Word of God, and the Spirit will give us insight into what is read. The presence of the Spirit (the anointing) in one's life will reveal more and more of the things of Christ, if one is open to learn.

A Rhema Word of the Spirit

As well as guiding us into all truth, the Holy Spirit is also able to give us a “Rhema” word of God. This has been referred to as a “word in season”. What is meant by a Rhema word? There are two Greek words that are translated into English with the one word *Word*, Rhema and Logos. The Greek word *Rhema* means an utterance, a portion of scripture that “speaks” to the heart of a believer. It comes as a distinct passage of scripture that is highly relevant to a current situation in a believer's life; it is timely and has a “know-so” within the core of a person's life. The other word, *Logos*, speaks of the scripture that is read and meditated on that we find in the Bible. The Greek word Rhema is not found in the English version of our Bibles, so unless one is able to check out the

Greek translation, we cannot know the intent of the writer, but the distinction is important for us to understand. For instance, Jesus said, "Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word [rhema] that proceeds out of the mouth of God" (Matthew 4:4). In another place Christ said, "The words [rhema] that I speak to you are spirit, and they are life" (John 6:63). The thought that the Lord is getting across is that there are certain times in certain situations that God will breathe life into a passage from the scriptures that will meet a need.

This type of word comes to us as an impression, or a thought. It can come to us in many forms. It may be through a scripture, a simple phrase that pops into your mind, but it can also be words from a song, etc. God can use many ways to speak a Rhema word to His people, just as He used many different illustrations, stories and parables when He was with His disciples to communicate. A true revelation, a "Rhema" word, will never contradict, supersede, or go against the Scriptures. We need to be open to receiving this type of encouragement and direction from the Holy Spirit, but always check any impressions whether personal or coming to you from another person or source, against the Word of God. The Word of God and the Holy Spirit will always agree, as they are the same source!

Have you ever received such an impression, or sensed that God was speaking to you about a specific situation? Explain.

Obedience: The Key to His Presence

One of the things that we are told about the Holy Spirit is that He came as a dove and descended onto the Lord Jesus at His baptism by John the Baptist. John the apostle writes,

"I saw the Spirit come down from heaven as a dove and remain on him. I would not have known him, except that the one who sent me to baptize with water told me, "the man on whom you see the Spirit come down and remain is he who will baptize with the Holy Spirit" (John 1:32-33).

Have you ever seen a dove fly down and sit on someone? I have never witnessed this myself, although I have seen pigeons land on someone, usually for food! When we lived in England, one of our favorite places to take people was a place called Trafalgar Square. This is the place where it seems all the pigeons in London gather! You may have seen photos of tourists feeding them. Four pigeons will sit on your arm and fight for a place on your head, too! All the time I have been there, though, I have never had a dove alight on me. Even though doves are of the same genus as pigeons, they are behaviorally very different. I have never heard of a dove alighting on a person, but here in the above passage of scripture, we see a picture of the Spirit descending like a dove upon the Lord Jesus and remaining. Doves are very timid and skittish. By that I mean that the slightest thing scares them off. Any sudden noises, any quick movement and they are gone. Once the Spirit comes to us when we become believers, He will remain upon the Christian for the rest of eternity. He will never leave us. But the presence of the Spirit on us can be

easily grieved to the extent that we lose something of the intimacy with the Spirit when we disobey Him. That special presence of the Spirit, called by John the anointing (1 John 2:27), must be guarded as a sacred trust and nurtured by quick repentance and forsaking of any sin if we want intimacy with Christ and have the Spirit remain on us. The Spirit descended and remained upon Jesus, which means that He was at home as He rested upon the Lord.

R.T. Kendall explains it this way in his book entitled, *The Sensitivity of the Spirit*:

“That the Holy Spirit descended and *remained* on Jesus tells us as much about Jesus as it does about the Holy Spirit. The Holy Spirit was at home with Jesus. They were mutually adjusted to each other. Jesus carried no bitterness or hate, no grudges, panic or spirit of vindictiveness to drive away the gentle Spirit. Described by Matthew as “gentle and humble in heart,” Jesus did not quarrel or cry out (Matthew 11:29). Yet “a bruised reed he will not break” (Matt. 11:20). He never struck out to hurt another.

The apostle Paul admonished us, “**And do not grieve the Holy Spirit of God, with whom you were sealed for the day of redemption**” (Ephesians 4:30). The Holy Spirit has feelings, and we can hurt His feelings when we grieve Him by the things we do. The Greek word translated “grieve” (*lupeo*) comes from *lupee*, which means “pain” or “sorrow.” It is the opposite of joy.

We know from the apostle Paul that the Holy Spirit can also be quenched. In Paul’s words, “**Do not put out the Spirit’s fire**” (1 Thessalonians 5:19). The words *put out* come from the Greek word *sbennumi*, which basically means, “to quench.” In the ancient Greek world it referred generally to extinguishing fire or burning objects. On the day of Pentecost, the Holy Spirit came to the people gathered in the Upper Room as what seemed to be “tongues of fire” (Acts 2:3). Paul’s warning not to quench the Spirit can only mean that the Spirit’s fire can be put out.”²

Listening to His voice and obedience to the Lord are the keys to walking and keeping in step with the Spirit as we walk through this world. Jesus made this clear in this passage to the disciples:

²³Jesus replied, “**Anyone who loves me will obey my teaching. My Father will love them, and we will come to them and make our home with them. ²⁴Anyone who does not love me will not obey my teaching. These words you hear are not my own; they belong to the Father who sent me (John 14:23-24).**

We must make the effort to not only know Christ’s teaching, but to also walk in obedience to what we learn of Him. The Lord says that this is the proof that you are a Christian; that you obey what Jesus taught. He is looking for God lovers. Those that are in a love relationship with Jesus Christ are those that obey His teaching, not only when

² R.T. Kendall, *The Sensitivity of the Spirit*, Published by Charisma House, page 26.

men's eyes are on you, but when nobody's eyes are on you, God's alone. The more you are obedient to a heart level, the more of the Spirit you will have. To walk in step with the Spirit is to live in such a way that you are agreeing with the Holy Spirit at every step. When you get out of step with the Holy Spirit, be quick to change and to repent so that you can quickly get back in step with Him and walk in His ways. If you keep yourself in step with the Word of God and the Spirit of God, the presence of God will be on you and with you. And this will be apparent to those around you.

The Prince of this World

Jesus now comes to the end of His conversation with the eleven around the table. He continues to prepare them by saying:

³⁰I will not say much more to you, for the prince of this world is coming. He has no hold over me (John 14:30).

Who is the Prince of this world? And what does Jesus mean by saying, "he has no hold over me?"

Every time we sin, we are opening the door a little bit more for the enemy to make inroads into our character to influence us towards doing his will. With Jesus it was completely different. He never gave the enemy any opportunity to get so much as a toe in the door of His life. Literally, Jesus was saying, "He has nothing on me." The testimony of those who knew Christ best was that He was perfect in every way, He never sinned (1 Peter 2:22). Only by being sinless could he be the perfect innocent sacrifice for sin and take our place for us and as us. We must close the door to the enemy having any hold in our life. Do not give him *any access* to your life. What the apostle John taught about forgiveness is so important. He said: "If we confess our sins, his is faithful and just and will forgive us our sins and purify us from all unrighteousness" (1 John 1:9). We must close the door to the enemy so that he has nothing in us and cannot accuse us before the Father. Only the blood of Jesus cleanses us from our sin.

The passage finishes with Jesus saying, "Come now; let us leave (John 14:31).

Jesus knew that the hour had come, and that His life would soon be required. All that He has known of the Father, He has revealed to this little band of believers. He knows that it will be up to them to spread the Word, and He entrusts them to the Father with these last words of truth. Just how important is it that we have an understanding of the Holy Spirit's presence and work in our lives? I think we can answer that by considering the fact that this is one of the last things that Jesus told His disciples before leaving them on this earth. He knew that they would be powerless without His Spirit. They would have the desire and the will to follow Him, but lack the power without the Spirit's help. He promises that the Spirit, the "Helper or Advocate," will be with them to teach them, lead them, guide them, and empower them. If this message was so important then, it is just as important to us today.

Prayer: Father, we ask that you will help us to be sensitive to your voice. Draw close to us as we draw close to you. Make us always aware of the things that grieve your Spirit. We need you!

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