

The Helper - John 14:15-31
Notes, Family Worship, Bible Reading

Notes from the Sermon

We are back in the Gospel of John this week, and in a section of the story that focuses on the last night of Jesus' life. The moment is the upper room and the conversation around the Last Supper. In this moment Jesus has redefined the Passover pointing to the cup as a picture of the blood He would spill on the cross and the bread representing His body that would be broken for them and us. But this was a bomb drop for the disciples. He just predicted His death in the coming hours and then made it clear that He was leaving them. But to make it even more confusing, Jesus tells them that He is going to prepare a place for them, that He will return to them and take them where He is going, and that they should rejoice that He is leaving. Then, on top of all of this, one of the twelve is revealed as a traitor who will sell Jesus out.

Put yourself in the shoes of these people sitting in the room with Jesus. They have left everything to follow Jesus as a rabbi, and spent the last three years following Jesus. They have put all their eggs in this basket, and now their leader is telling them He is ditching them and will die in the morning. Yet, they are to rejoice in His leaving because that is actually better for them. Huh?

Of course, we know the full story, so we can read this with the understanding that Jesus is going to give His life on the cross and then rise again, securing our redemption and the promise of heaven for us. But these words from Jesus are hitting men who are full of questions and struggles. The world is against them, they have doubts and fears, and maybe even disillusionment, and there is a real spiritual enemy on the attack. Jesus is preparing them for the life of discipleship after He is physically with them, and as a gracious gift, the Holy Spirit inspires John to record Jesus' words so we too can learn how to live as a follower of Jesus when He is not with us in the flesh. The big theme for this time of teaching is about living between the times of Jesus' appearing. These men are in the first appearing of Jesus in the World, as He came to be Savior. He will come again to receive His own and take them to the place He has prepared for us. But we live now, in this world and without the physical presence of Jesus. How could this be better, and what are we to do?

Jesus gives them the answer. He will not leave them as orphans, but will come to them again. Like many of Jesus' words, there are layers of meaning. For these people Jesus appeared to them after the resurrection, revealing Himself as the defeater of their enemies of death, the devil, and sin. But there is another vitally important way that Jesus comes to His people as the Father and the Son send the Holy Spirit to His people. The presence of the Spirit is with them at the time, specifically in Christ with them. But the promise is that the Holy Spirit will be in us.

There is so much confusion in the church about the person and work of the Holy Spirit. Some will associate the Spirit with bizarre groups who do all kinds of crazy things in the name of the Spirit. Others believe the presence of the Spirit is some kind of feeling, as if we could conjure Him up with the right set of songs. But the Spirit of God is so much more than this. Jesus promised power from God to His disciples when the Spirit came upon them (Acts 1:8), and in this passage promised that the presence and work of the Holy Spirit in our lives is equal to having the Father and the Son present. The Holy Spirit is fully God, a member of the Trinity, the glorious tri-personal One God that is revealed in Scripture. God the Father is the sovereign initiator of creation and our redemption, God Sovereign and powerful. God the Son is the securer of our salvation as He became a man and then gave His life, God the Savior. But the Holy Spirit is the working presence of God in the world, God with us. The Holy Spirit is present at creation active in Genesis 1:2 bringing order out of chaos making the earth perfect for the creation of humanity. The Holy Spirit is present throughout the entire Old Testament, filling the Temple with glory and resting on people to empower them in their divine calling as a king or prophet. Luke's Gospel is careful to show us that Jesus did everything in the power of the Holy Spirit, whom He had without measure. Christ will not send His followers out on their mission alone. No, the Spirit who created everything and was with the Old Testament heroes will not just be near, He will be in them, filling them with power. Read over Jesus' words and look at all the things promised from the work of the Spirit. It begins with love for Christ and obedience to His commands. This is the first proof of the presence of the Spirit. But the Spirit is also the One who brings the presence of the Trinitarian

God to us, causes us to see Jesus in His fullness, and gives us Spiritual life in the new birth.

In this moment when it felt like hope was lost, Jesus gives His followers a great promise. The Holy Spirit will come on them. They don't understand it then, and I fear we don't understand this promise now. For the most part, we have developed a self-sufficiency in our lives and churches so that we do not really need the Spirit. So we lack real power in life and especially as we seek to glorify God and live for his mission. But oh, that we would seek and long for the Spirit to fill us and empower us. If we are followers of Jesus He is with us. But much like a boat in harbor, we need to set our sails so that when the mighty wind of the Spirit blows we are ready to have our sails filled with that wind.

There is an interesting play on words in this section. In verses 1-3, Jesus told His followers that he is leaving to prepare them a place. The Greek word means a place to dwell or live, a room or house. So Jesus says, dudes, I am leaving but I am making your dream home and will someday come back to get you and take you to where I am. The play on words here is in verse 23, where Jesus tells them that the Father and the Son (through the presence of the Spirit) will come make our *home* with him (the one who loves Jesus, that's you and me). The word "home" here is the same word used in verse 2. So here is what Jesus is saying, and the source of our hope. He is leaving (the physical Jesus) to accomplish our redemption and prepare a home. But until then He will send the Spirit, so in a very real way the Father and the Son through the Spirit will set up His home in us. This is hope for our lives between the times.

Bible Reading for the Week

Daily Bible Readings

Sun	Mon	Tues	Weds	Thurs	Fri	Sat
Genesis 16	Genesis 17	Genesis 18	Genesis 19	Genesis 20	Genesis 21	Genesis 22

Reading from this past week: John 14:15-31

Reading in preparation for this coming Sunday: John 15:1-11

Family Worship

Nothing but the Blood of Jesus

https://youtu.be/IRzMbIED_5U

Gospel Project Main Point and Big Picture Question

Story: Jesus Forgives and Restores

Main Point: Jesus forgave Peter and gave him a mission.

Big Picture Question: What is our mission as believers?

Answer: Our mission as believers is to make disciples of all nations by the power of the Spirit.

Scripture: John 21:1-19

Scripture

John 14:15-31

*Who is the Holy Spirit and why is He important in our lives?

*What does Jesus mean in verse 17 when He says the Holy Spirit will be in us?

*What are some things we can do to open our lives to the work of the Spirit?

Prayer

*Pray for all of the volunteers who work every week to make our Sunday service at Genesis possible.

*Ask God to help you seek and long for the work of the Holy Spirit in your life.