

## **John: The Other Counselor**

**John 14:15-31**

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As we continue our study of John's gospel, we come to chapter 14, beginning at verse 16, hear the word of God:

I will ask the Father, and He will give you another Helper, that He may be with you forever; that is the Spirit of truth, whom the world cannot receive, because it does not see Him or know Him, but you know Him because He abides with you and will be in you. I will not leave you as orphans; I will come to you. After a little while the world will no longer see Me, but you will see Me; because I live, you will live also. In that day you will know that I am in My Father, and you in Me, and I in you. He who has My commandments and keeps them is the one who loves Me; and he who loves Me will be loved by My Father, and I will love him and will disclose Myself to him." Judas (not Iscariot) said to Him, "Lord, what then has happened that You are going to disclose Yourself to us and not to the world?" Jesus answered and said to 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 abode with him. He who does not love Me does not keep My words; and the word which you hear is not Mine, but the Father's who sent Me. These things I have spoken to you while abiding with you. 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 said to you. I leave with you; My peace I give to you; not as the world gives do I give to you. Do not let your heart be troubled, nor let it be fearful. You heard that I said to you, 'I go away, and I will come to you.' If you loved Me, you would have rejoiced because I go to the Father, for the Father is greater than I. Now I have told you before it happens, so that when it happens, you may believe.

I will not speak much more with you, for the ruler of the world is coming, and he has nothing in Me; but so that the world may know that I love the Father, I do exactly as the Father commanded Me. Get up, let us go from here.

Amen. May God bless to us the reading of His holy and inerrant word. Let's pray together.

*Our Father in heaven, we come into Your presence now asking for the help of the Holy Spirit. O come, Holy Spirit, and make known to us the meaning of these great words, and write them upon our hearts, for Jesus' sake, Amen.*

On April 19, 1642, the House of Commons in London, you understand, called together, and ordered that the names of divines, ministers, theologians, fit to be consulted should be presented to the House. They were chosen, two from each county in England, two from each university, two from the channel islands, Jersey, Guernsey and so on; only one from each county in Wales, and four from the city of London. The assembly was called to meet, as you well know, on the first of July, 1643. It's a date that's indelibly etched upon your consciousness. What was the opening sermon for that day? There was a sermon, and apparently a fairly lengthy one, and it was preached by the prolocutor, the chairman of The Westminster Assembly, a man by the name of William Twisse, and his text, John 14:18, "I will not leave you as orphans, I will come to you." A beautiful text.

It would not be an exaggeration to say that John's gospel is the gospel of the Holy Spirit, and nowhere is the doctrine of the Holy Spirit more eloquently expounded than in these very chapters that are before us in the upper room, in John 14-16. Almost every word that Jesus speaks now, He speaks from the vantage point that He is about to leave, that He is about to leave His disciples, and they're troubled, and they're afraid--understandably so. But He urges them, "Let not your hearts be troubled. Do not be afraid. Because even though I go away, I come to you again."

Now, you can imagine the disciples in the upper room had no idea what He was talking about. I imagine that had very little idea, very little apprehension of what it was He was saying to them. Some, indeed, thought that He was speaking, and commentators since have thought, that He was speaking of the resurrection. He would go away and He would come again to them. What a suitable text that would be for today, but, alas, it is not the interpretation. It is a consequence of the resurrection, that as a consequence of the resurrection, when Jesus ascends to His Father, the Holy Spirit is poured forth upon the Church. Jesus, as it were, by the Holy Spirit, comes to His disciples again. They understood this afterwards. John understood it, when he came to write his gospel, he understood then what Jesus meant when He said that.

That's not the first time that John has recorded words of Jesus about the Holy Spirit. In John 7, at the Feast of Tabernacles, that astonishing ritual when, on the great day of the feast, a priest would go to the Pool of Siloam with a golden pitcher full of water, bring it to the temple, pour it down a funnel that would bring the water to the very base of the altar of sacrifice. It was associated with several prophecies of the Old Testament, closing chapters of Zechariah, Isaiah 12

especially, "I will draw waters from the wells of salvation," and John adds in chapter 7, that "He meant by that the receiving of the Holy Spirit." It's interesting that John records that after the crucifixion, soldiers speared the side of Jesus and out of His side flowed blood and water; water, perhaps, alluding to the water of chapter 7, alluding to the Holy Spirit.

## **I. The Holy Spirit brings God's presence.**

Here, in these closing verses of John 14 several aspects of the Holy Spirit are drawn to our attention, and the first is this: the presence that the Holy Spirit brings. He had said in 16:7, that "going away is to your advantage." But in John 14:18, He says, "I will come to you"; verse 20, "You will know"; verse 21, "I will manifest Myself to you." He's talking about the outpouring of the Holy Spirit, that as a consequence of Jesus' death and His burial and resurrection and ascension to the right hand of God, the Holy Spirit is poured forth upon the Church. Verse 17, "He will come, that is, the Spirit of Truth, who the world cannot receive because it cannot behold Him or know Him, but you know Him because He abides with you and will be in you." Here in verse 17, John uses what is grammatically correct, the neuter pronoun, but when He goes on in verse 26, "When the helper, the Holy Spirit whom the Father will send in My name, He will teach you all things," he reverts to the masculine pronoun. It's just a subtle little change, but John is signaling that while grammatically it was correct to use the neuter pronoun, the Holy Spirit is not an it. As we have previously learned, the Holy Spirit is a *person*, the Holy Spirit is the third person of the Trinity, He's God of Gods and Lord of Lords. And Jesus is saying, "I will go away, but I will come to you, and I will come to you personally, and I will come to you in the person of the Holy Spirit, and it will be the Holy Spirit's ministry to make Me known to you, to make My presence known to you."

Imagine, if He hadn't gone away. Imagine, as some Christians still misguidedly believe, that Jesus resided in Jerusalem. Imagine that instead of going away, He would ascend to some throne in Jerusalem and become king of Israel, in a literal sense, that He would not go away. Imagine the airplanes, the boats, the trains across Europe, heading for Jerusalem, to Mt. Zion, just to catch a little glimpse of Jesus. Imagine when you got to within the precincts of Jerusalem, the millions of people. Today, can you imagine the millions of people who would be thronging to Jerusalem. You would go to see Jesus, but you would never see Him. And Jesus is saying, "I'm going away, but I will come to you." The expression in Northern Ireland, and you hear it in prayer so often, "I will be closer to you than breathing." I will be in you. My presence will be made known to you by the Holy Spirit. The presence of Jesus. What did we sing in Sunday School this morning, "And He walks with me and He talks with me, and He tells me I am His own, and the joy we share as we tarry there, none other has ever known." We haven't sung that in awhile. He walks with me and He talks with me. Have you ever found yourself talking to Jesus? In the car on Interstate 55? I do it all the time. Do you ever find

yourself in your study, in your closet, in your hideaway, talking to Jesus? Jesus is sitting at the right hand of God, why are you talking to Jesus? Because He's right here, because by the Holy Spirit He's right here, He makes the presence of Jesus known to me, He makes Jesus real.

## II. The ministry of the Holy Spirit.

And Jesus talks about the ministry of the Holy Spirit, not only in terms of the presence of Jesus, but the ministry of the Holy Spirit as a teacher. Follow the line of reasoning and look at verses 23-24, "If anyone loves Me, he will keep My word, and My Father will love him and We will come to him and make Our abode with him. He who does not love Me does not keep My words, and the word which you hear is not Mine but the Father's who sent Me."

Jesus is indicating what kind of ministry the Holy Spirit has, and it's a ministry of instruction, a ministry of education, in the truth of the gospel. He speaks words, words which come through and from Him, but also from the Father in heaven. And in verse 26, "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 said to you." There's not a little here about the way in which the Bible itself, at least the New Testament, was inspired by the ministry of the Holy Spirit, in using instruments like John to remind him of the things that Jesus said and did and compose this wonderful gospel for us. It's the ministry of the Holy Spirit. It's our great teacher.

He says in verse 20, "In that day," the day of Pentecost, the day of the outpouring of the Holy Spirit, "you will know that I am in the Father and you in Me and I in you." Holy Spirit, what will You teach us? Holy Spirit, when you come, what will You teach us? "I will teach," the Holy Spirit says, "that Jesus is in the Father and that you are in Him." What an extraordinary thing. I will teach that Jesus is in the Father and that you are in Him. We need to pause for a moment and catch our breath. John is using those little words, those little prepositions; Jesus is *in* the Father, and you are *in* Jesus. It's so simple to say it but it contains some of the greatest profundities known to us. That Jesus and the Father have a relationship in which they are *in* one another.

How many did your homework last week and read the bulletin, those big, long thousand dollar words, *parichoresis* and *circumincessio*? Get them into your vocabulary; they are beautiful words. Try using them over a cup of coffee one day this week and get it right. Jesus is *in* the Father; the Father is *in* the Son. They have a communion, a rapport, a fellowship together. That's what the Holy Spirit is going to teach us. He's going to teach us how much the Father loves His Son, and how much the Son loves His Father. He's going to teach you how much the Son gave of Himself in order to be obedient to every stipulation of His Father in heaven. That He has come to do His Father's will, that He thinks His Father's

thoughts, that He dwells in His Father, that He longs to gaze into His Father's eyes. He's the only begotten Son of the Father but that even more than that, the Father loves the Son. The Father loves the Son; the Father is in the Son. There's something about love that wants to be in someone's mind and in someone's thoughts and in someone's heart. Isn't that what it means to be in love? How many of you have asked the question to those whom you love, "Did you think about me today?" I know it sound like a terribly self-centered question to ask, but you've asked it. You've thought it even if you haven't asked it. "Did you think about me today?" And here is the ministry of the great teacher of heaven. The Father is in the Son's thoughts and heart and mind and being, and the Son is in the Father's heart and mind and being. Oh, doesn't it remind you of those words that the Father can't but express to His Son at the beginning of His earthly ministry at the baptism of John and again on the Mount of Transfiguration, "This is my beloved Son whom I love." The disciples were troubled because Jesus was going away and they were never going to see Him again. "My dear disciples," Jesus is saying, "you haven't begun to know me yet. On that day you will know who I really am; that I am in the Father."

This opens up for us a little of what John goes on to say in his epistle in 1 John. He is saying that our fellowship is with the Father and with the Son. The Holy Spirit has come to teach us the depths of God, but not only that. Look at what He goes on to say at the end of verse 20. "That I am in the Father and you in Me and I in you." Not just the relationship of the Son to the Father and the Father to the Son, but the relationship that you and I have to Jesus and the relationship that Jesus has to us. We are *in* Christ. It's a teaching that Jesus is now just beginning to unfold, and He's going to elaborate on it. In the next chapter is the story of the the vine and the branches and how the branches are a part of the vine and they draw their energy and their sap from the vine. They are *in* the vine. This is the Spirit's teaching--our union with Christ. And these men in the upper room are going to be used as instruments of God in making that truth known. But not only as one who makes the presence of Jesus known, not only as a teacher, but thirdly, as an advocate or a paraclete.

### **III. The Holy Spirit is our helper.**

Look at what He says in verse 16. "I will ask the Father and He will give you another." In the New American Standard version it says *helper*. It's the word *paracletos*, another advocate, another helper, another strengthener, another counselor. In the New Testament, this word is usually associated with a legal backgrounds, and he will develop it in chapter 16. Jesus is speaking of the Spirit as His own advocate, one who is engaging in the prosecution of the world, convicting the world of sin and righteousness and judgments to come.

One of the things He does is to provide a bulwark for the people of God. When you're floundering, when you're in trouble, when you're in difficulty and your heart

is torn apart, what do you do? Well, you hire a lawyer in the twenty-first century. But in the first century you couldn't just walk down the street and go into the offices of Abraham, Isaac and Sons. If you found yourself in trouble and brought up before a court of law and you wanted someone to represent you, you would go to your best friend. You'd go to someone who knows you, someone who knows your reputation, somebody who knows your character, somebody who can speak and vouch for you. And it's extraordinary that that is what Jesus says here of the Holy Spirit. He says that He's our advocate in the sense that He's our best friend. I will call upon the Father and He will send you the Holy Spirit. He will send you one who will vouch for you and plead for you and counsel you and take care of you and strengthen you and be to you all that you need.

Now, as I say, that part of the Holy Spirit's ministry is going to be unfolded in greater depth in the coming chapters and in particular in chapter 16. The Holy Spirit is our advocate who pleads our case. When you are at the end of yourselves and you're at the end of your tether and you don't know what to say, and the Holy Spirit will speak for you and He will take your broken heart and your broken spirits and bind them together and He will remind you of words of Scripture and promises that you've learnt when you were a little boy or a little girl and remind you that there are promises which are "yea" and "amen" in Jesus Christ, and they can never be broken. And Jesus will be your best friend; He will never let you down and He will never misrepresent you. He will never misrepresent the Father to you. He will remind you of the love of Jesus and the aching heart of the Father for His Son. Greater is He that is in you than He that is in the world.

#### **IV. The Holy Spirit will prepare a place for the Father and Son in the hearts of believers.**

And then there's a fourth image of the Holy Spirit that I want to allude to and that is in verse 23. "If anyone loves Me he will keep My word and the Father will love him and we will come to him and make our abode with him." And you need to turn back now to John 14, verse 2. "In my Father's house are many dwelling places; if it were not so, I would have told you. I go to prepare a place, an abode—actually, it's the same word and these are the only places in the New Testament where that word is used. Now follow what Jesus is saying. He is saying in verse 2, "I'm going to prepare a place for you at my Father's side." And here in verse 26 He's saying that the Holy Spirit is coming to make a place for the Father and the Son to dwell in you. Do you see how extraordinary that is? I'm going to make a place for you at My Father's side, and the Holy Spirit is coming to make a place for My Father at your side. And the reciprocity of that—the way those two inter-fellowship and relate with each other—it's all bound up, you see. Just as Jesus is in the Father, so we are in Jesus. He goes to make a place for us at the Father's side. The Holy Spirit comes to make a place for the Father at our side so that we might become the temples of the Holy Spirit. In the words of Ephesians 2:22, "so

that we might become a dwelling place in which God lives by His Spirit.”

Now, what is the point of all of this? The point of all of this Jesus makes manifest in verse 27. “Peace I leave with you. Shalom I leave with you. Not as the world gives, give I unto you.” Not a fleeting peace, not a paper peace that simply papers over all of the cracks, but a solid and a lasting peace. So do not be troubled; do not be afraid whatever the issue, whatever the calamity. Matthew Henry says, “When Christ was about to leave the world, He made His will. His soul He committed to the Father; His body He bequeathed to Joseph; His clothes fell to the soldiers; His mother He left to the care of John. But what should He leave to His poor disciples who had left all for Him? Silver and gold—He had none. But He left them that which was infinitely better—His peace.”

There's a curious thing here at the end of the chapter. Those little words, “Arise, let us go from here.” And the problem is that they don't arise. The problem is they don't actually leave here until the first verse of chapter 18. It's given rise to all kinds of speculations. Actually, the word that Jesus uses here is a military word. It's not so much a word, “Let's get up and get out of here.” It's a word of command to His beleaguered soldiers that they need to get ready now. They need to steel themselves and prepare themselves now. They need to wrap themselves in gospel armor and the promises of the covenant now. They need to be assured that the King of Kings is with them now, and that even though He is going away, He is coming to them again by the power of the Holy Spirit. They need to prepare for battle in the assurance that they are victors in Jesus Christ. Because Jesus the mighty warrior is here; He's going to disarm powers and authorities through the blood of His cross. He's going to destroy Him that has the power of death. The ruler of the world is coming, verse 30, and He has already been at work in one of the disciples and will be at work in Peter soon. So, get yourselves ready; get yourselves prepared. Notice what Jesus says, “He has nothing in Me.”

There isn't anything about Jesus in His life or words or testimony that Satan can get hold of and use to his advantage. And though this world with devils filled should threaten to undo us, we will not fear for God hath willed His truth to triumph through us. The prince of darkness grim; we tremble not for him. His rage we can endure for lo, his doom is sure. One little word shall fell him. Let's pray together.

*Our Father in heaven, we thank you for your Word. Thank you for this beautiful insight into the ministry of the Holy Spirit. Holy Spirit, we thank you for your presence in our hearts. We thank you for the way in which you make the things of Christ known to us. Strengthen us now; steel us for the coming battle. Help us as we rise from this sanctuary and all the peace and calm of it to perhaps, difficulties that lie outside of these doors that will come afresh to our mind and consciousness and heart and threaten to undo us. We tremble not for Satan for one little word shall fell him—Jesus. Hear us Lord, for Jesus' sake, Amen.*

## **A Guide to the Evening Service**

### **The Themes of the Service**

Tonight's passage in the Gospel of John continues in the Upper Room. It focuses on the promise of the Holy Spirit.

### **The Hymns and Spiritual Songs**

Holy Ghost, Dispel Our Darkness

Be assured that though this hymn is not often sung, the tune is the grand Welsh (!) tune, Hyfrydol (which, by the way, means 'beautiful'). The words come from the seventeenth century (1640s). Their author is Paul Gerhardt, who lived and preached mostly in Berlin. He is the author of some other familiar hymns, including, "Commit Thou All Thy Griefs," and "O Sacred Head Now Wounded." We'll sing from these words:

Holy Ghost, dispel our sadness;  
Pierce the clouds of nature's night;  
Come, great Source of joy and gladness,  
Breathe Your life, and spread Your light.  
From the height which knows no measure,  
As a gracious shower descend,  
Bringing down the richest treasure  
Man can wish, or God can send.  
Author of the new creation,  
Come with blessing and with power.  
Make our hearts your habitation;  
On our souls Your graces shower.  
Hear, O hear our supplication,  
Blessed Spirit, God of peace!  
Rest upon this congregation,  
With the fullness of Your grace.

### **All Hail the Power of Jesus' Name! (Diadem)**

A much-loved hymn of Christendom, the first stanza appeared anonymously in *The Gospel Magazine*, November 1779. In April 1780, the same magazine published eight verses titled, "On the Resurrection, the Lord Is King." It resurfaced half a dozen years later, again anonymously, accompanied by an acrostic poem whose letters spelled out "Edward Perronet." We sang it tonight to the glorious "Diadem" – continuing our praise to Christ in light of His resurrection.



## O Breath of Life, Come Sweeping Through Us

A relatively “modern” hymn (it was written in the twentieth century!), it speaks of the effect of the coming of the Holy Spirit upon the Church in revival and cleansing. Surely it is something for which we eagerly long: that God the Holy Spirit would come down and revive us again!

### The Sermon

At the top of our agenda these days ought to be the question: how can I get myself and the church awake to a wartime mentality? As I prepare these words, our country is at war and men and women are facing hostilities in a foreign land far away from home. But in many ways, the Church, too, is at war. Satan never sleeps! But the Church often is.

Picture a great army asleep with mighty weapons in their limp hands and armor in their tents. Picture them sleeping in the fields all around one of Satan's strongholds. Suddenly, an eyelid blinks, a head lifts and looks around. Then another and another. A strange awakening spreads through the field. Muscles are flexed. Armor fitted. Swords sharpened. Eyes meet with silent excitement. The light in the commander's tent goes on, the generals gather, and the strategy for the attack is laid.

What has happened? The *Holy Spirit* has begun to move upon the armies of the Lord. "Awake, O sleeper, and arise from the dead, and Christ shall give you light ... be filled with the Holy Spirit .... Put on the whole armor of God ... and take the sword of the Spirit which is the word of God .... Keep alert ... and help each other be bold" (Eph. 5:14,18; 6:11,17-19). There is only one power that can break the spell of Satan, waken the armies of the Lord, and rout the god of this age – the power of the *Holy Spirit*.

This poor band of helpless disciples in the Upper Room would shortly turn the world upside down! And what would account for it? The Holy Spirit.

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