

## John 14:15-26 – “Jesus Promises the Holy Spirit”

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**Intro:** When I was around 16 years old, I had the joy of going to Israel with my father. It was a first trip for my dad and my only trip to the Holy Land. The church my father was pastoring had given him a trip to Israel with an evangelist friend, Jimmy Johnson, who took a group every year. A kind individual in the church made it possible for me to go along on this memorable tour. While in Israel we met a young American man, who made it clear that he was in country on official business, but that he was prohibited by the United States government from talking about the kind of work he was doing. This fellow was a delightful follower of Christ, and we had a couple of days good fellowship with him before he had to get back to work. I remember standing in front of the King David Hotel in Jerusalem as he walked away. Our Israeli tour guide was standing with us seeing him off. As he walked away, our guide said to us, “He’s a pilot. He’s probably here teaching our boys how to fly your jets!” “How do you know he’s a pilot?” we asked. “Just look at him,” he said, “They all walk the same way; they have a certain swagger.” The friend could not tell our guide his business, but he didn’t have to. His bearing, his speech, his enculturation had given away his secret, without him ever saying a word. What he was could be hidden on the outside, but who he was on the inside couldn’t be stifled. Jesus, preparing His disciples for His departure to the Father wanted to assure them that He had made preparation for them to carry on in His absence, and that the preparation He had in view was much the same as that our young pilot friend had experienced. Jesus was not only equipping His disciples on the outside; He had arranged for an inner enculturation as well. He would send to each believer, the Holy Spirit. Tonight we want to look at this theme of the Spirit and the believer and we’ll find that...

**Proposition:** Christ has given His continuing presence to believers through the gift of the Holy Spirit so that we can bring Him glory.

Three thoughts to help us work through our study: (vv.15-17) The Spirit is Given to All Who Believe; (vv.18-24) The Spirit’s Presence is Christ’s Presence; (vv.25-26) The Spirit’s Mission is to Glorify Christ.

(vv.15-17) The Spirit is Given to All Who Believe – Jesus began His discussion of the Spirit’s coming by asserting that the Spirit would be given to everyone who believes. **John 14:15–17 - 15** *“If you love me, you will keep my commandments. 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.* In these verses Jesus distinguished between two types of people: those who love Him and obey Him and so can receive the Holy Spirit, and those who cannot receive the Spirit because of their rejection of God. To *believe* is to commit oneself to God whole-heartedly. Such a commitment is revealed in a life of love and obedience to Christ. This is so crucial a point that Christ enforced it four times in the passage we are studying (cf. vv. 15; 21; 23; 24). After announcing this theme in verse 15, Jesus immediately followed saying, *“If you love me, you will keep my commandments,”* by promising the outpouring of the Holy Spirit on all who believe, *“And I will ask the Father, and he will give you another Helper, to be with you forever, even the Spirit of truth.”* Notice four significant truths about the Spirit and His coming to believers:

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- The Father sent the Spirit in response to the Son’s request – The Holy Spirit could not come in fullness upon believers until Christ finished His work on Calvary and ascended to the Father on high. John had earlier spoken of this in **John 7:37–39 - 37** *On the last day of the feast, the great day, Jesus stood up and cried out, “If anyone thirsts, let him come to me and drink. 38 Whoever believes in me, as the Scripture has said, ‘Out of his heart will flow rivers of living water.’” 39* Now this he said about the Spirit, whom those who believed in him were to receive, for as yet the Spirit had not been given, because Jesus was not yet glorified. This distinguishes the New Testament believer from Old Testament believer’s experience of the Spirit. In the Old Testament, the Holy Spirit was certainly at work in the lives of believers, but His work was primarily an “outer” work through laws, providences, visions and prophecies. The Spirit’s work today is primarily an “inner” work, in the hearts, minds and wills of those who believe. This is what Jesus was alluding to when He said to His disciples, “You know him, for he dwells with you and will be in you.” The Holy Spirit dwelt *with* Old Testament believers, but now dwells *in* New Testament saints.
- The Holy Spirit is another Helper of the same kind as Jesus – When Jesus told His disciples that He would send them “another Helper,” the particular language used indicates “another of the same kind.” Meaning, another person like Jesus – one who could be a Helper, an Advocate and a Counselor (all possible translation of the word indicated by “Helper” in our text). This coming Helper would continue Jesus’ work of being a friend, counselor, intercessor, coach, corrector and encourager to His friends.
- The Holy Spirit would come to them and never leave them – Jesus assured them that the Spirit once sent to them would continue with them forever, indicating a permanent change of status in those who believe. Those who believe are put into Christ and are joined to Him forever, not just for a little while. Once the Spirit is given, He never departs. Ever.
- The Holy Spirit is the Spirit of Truth – Which means that He, like Jesus, is God. Earlier in the evening Jesus had said, “I am the way, the truth and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me.” The Spirit is coequal with Jesus and like Jesus is also coequal with the Father. The Holy Spirit is God.

All of this leads to a conclusion:

[DOCTRINAL POINT] God has given the Holy Spirit to all who believe at the request of Jesus, His Son.

[ILLUSTRATION] Have you ever been promised a gift that was too good to believe? Something so wonderful that it would be life changing if you really could receive it? Something of such high value that the very idea it might come to you as a gift seemed perhaps a bit too good to be true? If you’ve put your faith in Christ, you’ve received that gift!

[APPLICATION] You didn’t earn it. You can’t purchase it with good works or ritual or right feelings. The gift is yours whether you feel it or not. How do you know? Do you love Jesus enough to obey His commands? If so, this gift is yours because Christ has given you the gift of the Holy Spirit. No one keeps

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the commands of Jesus who doesn't love Him, and our love for Him and obedience is evidence of the Spirit's presence in our lives. Someone may think, “Well, I'm trying to obey, but I don't always feel much love for Him.” Isn't it wonderful that the Apostle John helps us with that too? In **1 John 5:3** he tells us: **3 For this is the love of God, that we keep his commandments. And his commandments are not burdensome.** In other words, faithful, Spirit led obedience is love for Jesus. Every believer receives the Holy Spirit at the moment of conversion as a gift from the Father at the request of His Son, based upon the Son's finished work on Calvary. Rejoice!

(vv.18-24) The Spirit's Presence, is Christ's Presence – Jesus promised His disciples that He would return to them, meaning that the Spirit's coming to them would be a manifestation of His presence with them forever. **John 14:18 - 18** “*I will not leave you as orphans; I will come to you.*” Jesus' concern for His disciples was such that He could not bear the thought of leaving them in a hostile world without His present help. When He said, “*I will come to you,*” it is unlikely that what He had in mind were post-resurrection appearances. Almost certainly He is speaking in the context of this passage – The Holy Spirit would be sent as a manifestation of His presence with all who believe. This interpretation is confirmed in verses 21 & 23: **John 14:21 - 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.* **John 14:23 - 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.* Notice how these verses follow the pattern set in verse 15: Those who love and obey Him, will receive the gift of His indwelling, manifest presence. The difference in language is a tautology: two different ways of saying the same thing. Just as Jesus could say to His followers “*Whoever has seen me has seen the Father,*” (v.9) so He can say to them now, “Whoever has the Spirit has Me.” Just as Jesus is the exact image of His Father, so the Spirit is the exact manifestation of both the Father and the Son in the believer's life. His point is:

[DOCTRINAL POINT] The Spirit's presence in the life of a believer is Christ's manifestation in the believer as well.

[ILLUSTRATION] In Biblical archaeology it is of utmost importance to establish the provenance of articles reputed to be ancient artifacts for if care is not taken, vast sums of money can be paid for forgeries or stolen items purchased for display in museums. In order for an item to be authenticated as genuine, the place, date and condition the item was in when it was discovered must be established beyond all doubt. Unless one knows the source of the item, you had best not purchase it for your museum! In just this same way, we must know the provenance of the Holy Spirit in order to be assured of our genuine reception of the presence of Christ in our lives.

[APPLICATION] This passage leaves no reasonable doubt that the coming of the Spirit into a believer's life upon conversion signals his or her final and complete union with Christ for all of eternity. We know the source of the Spirit – the Father and the Son. We know how the Spirit is obtained – by grace alone, through faith alone. And we have the testimony of the Son – “*I will not leave you as orphans, I will come*

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to you.” Here is clarity: The Spirit’s presence in a believer’s life is the manifestation of the Father and the Son’s presence in his or her life.

(vv.25-26) The Spirit’s Mission is to Glorify Christ – Jesus spoke to His disciples while He was with them and would continue to speak to them through His Spirit once He returned to the Father. **John 14:25–26 - 25** *“These things I have spoken to you while I am still with you. 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.* Jesus elaborated on this further in **John 16:12–15 - 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.* When Jesus had finished His work on the cross, He had finished the work of redemption, but He had not finished giving to His disciples all that He wanted them to understand. The Spirit was given the job of helping them remember all that Jesus had taught them, and of interpreting correctly – giving them understanding of – the things He had said. This is the primary mission of the Spirit to this very day: He seeks to help believers understand God’s revelation of Himself in Christ so that the Father and the Son can be glorified through this manifestation of grace. John 16:14 makes this clear: **14** *He will glorify me, for he will take what is mine and declare it to you.*

[DOCTRINAL POINT] The Spirit’s mission is to manifest Christ’s glory by opening minds and hearts to God’s truth revealed in Christ.

[ILLUSTRATION] On the Day of Pentecost, Spirit filled believers spoke in tongues. No, no! Wipe from your minds the thought of unknown speech ecstatically pouring from the lips of the newly empowered Church. Whether God gives “heavenly languages” is a debate for another day, but the point of Pentecost surely was this: The Spirit has come to make Christ known to a lost and dying world, and only through His power can that possibly happen.

[APPLICATION] And He does that work in believers and through believers to this very day. Isn’t it amazing? Isn’t that the glory of Christ?

**Conclusion:** The Spirit forms Christ in believers today, the way the military formed swagger into our friend the fighter pilot. It’s an inside job! Jesus does not want His followers to be orphans. He longs for each one of us to understand and rejoice in His indwelling presence in the Holy Spirit even now. Have you put your faith in Christ? Then you are “in Christ,” and Christ is in you. What does that all mean? That, too, is a discussion for another day! But for tonight, know this: All believers have His presence and power through the Spirit of Truth, His gift to all who believe. And this is to the praise of His glory!