

## John 15:26-16:4 – “The Help of the Helper”

(Pew Bible Page: 902)

**Intro:** Have you ever been in one of those situations in which you knew you were in deep trouble – perhaps financial, maybe relational, maybe work related – you were in trouble, and you had no idea where help would come from? I suppose all of us at one time or another have found ourselves in such a fix. Remember how hopeless that felt? Remember the oppressive sense of inadequacy? Remember the fear? It isn't a great feeling, is it? Jesus was getting ready to return to His Father in heaven, and He anticipated very well what these friends He loved would be going through following His arrest, trial, crucifixion, and death. He also knew what they would go through for His sake after His resurrection and ascension. He was determined to give them something ahead of time that would bring comfort and steadiness to their souls, so once again He turned to the coming of the Holy Spirit as their Helper. His message of reassurance and comfort to them, is also a blessing to us. Let's look tonight at this promise of the coming of the Holy Spirit to be the Helper of believers. Where does the Holy Spirit come from? What is His ministry? How does He help believers today?

**Proposition:** The Spirit of Truth has been sent from the Father to help us in our weakness. Receive His help by faith.

Our study breaks into four movements: (v.26) The Spirit Sent from the Father; (v.27) He Helps Us in our Witness; (v.1) He Helps us to Endure; (vv.2-4) He Helps us in Tribulation.

(v.26) The Spirit Sent from the Father – Jesus did not want to leave His disciples without hope of strong help in His absence, so He made it plain that the Helper who was coming would proceed from the Father Himself. **John 15:26 - 26** *“But when the Helper comes, whom I will send to you from the Father, the Spirit of truth, who proceeds from the Father, he will bear witness about me.* Jesus made plain that when the Holy Spirit came to help His disciples, the Spirit would be fully able to fulfill His mission in the disciples, just as Jesus was fully able to complete His mission on their behalf. He made known to the disciples that the Spirit of truth that would come to them would proceed from the Father, at the request of the Son. Notice in this verse all three members of the Trinity working together to help those who believe. Here is an insight into the *economy*<sup>1</sup> of God: The Spirit, who is God, proceeds from the Father, who is God, at the request of the Son, who is God. The Holy Spirit is God, sent from God, at the request of God. For what purpose? To bear witness to the fact that the Son had also been sent by the Father. Everything depends on the certainty and surety of this testimony! What help would the Spirit give to Christ's friends?

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<sup>1</sup> Working arrangement.

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(v.27) He Helps us in Our Witness – Because of the crucial nature of the disciple’s mission, Jesus spoke first about the Helper’s role in the Apostle’s witness. **John 15:27 - 27** *And you also will bear witness, because you have been with me from the beginning.* There are at least two aspects of the Holy Spirit’s help to be considered: His crucial role in establishing the certainty of the Christian message, and His powerful help in communicating that message. The certainty and surety of the Christian message is based on the eyewitness accounts of the Apostles (cf. John 14:26). That is why Christ said here, *“you have been with me from the beginning.”* The truth about Jesus’ life, ministry and death is not a fable; it is based on eyewitness accounts. Secondly, this message would be communicated to the world, not through normal human means, but through the powerful strength of the Holy Spirit speaking through Christ’s friends (cf. Acts 2:1-12; Acts 4:29-31). The essence of Christian witness is delivering the authentic message of truth through Spirit empowered words that make an impact. This is the ministry of the Spirit through the believer’s witness. *“No one can come to me unless the Father draws him, and I will raise him up on the last day”* (John 6:44). The Father draws men to Christ through Spirit taught and empowered witness to the truth about Jesus.

(v.1) He Helps us to Endure – The Spirit helps believers to endure in the faith. **John 16:1 - 1** *“I have said all these things to you to keep you from falling away.* Salvation is a miracle, but no less a miracle is the endurance of the believer in the faith. Both acts of grace come to us in the same way: The Spirit brings the word Christ speaks, to quicken us to life and to guard us in our faith. All God’s works in us are done through this work of the Word and the Spirit working together for our saving, sanctification, and keeping. The Spirit empowers believers to remain faithful as we remember and wait for the promises of God to be fulfilled. He *“helps us in our weakness”* (Romans 8:26-27). We enter these blessings by faith – We believe that God is there and that He will, in His own time and way, fulfill every promise He has made to us (cf. Hebrews 11:1 & 6). The Spirit helps us to endure.

(vv.2-4) He Helps us in Tribulation – Jesus prepared His disciples for times of testing and tribulation by telling them ahead of time what to expect. **John 16:2-4 - 2** *They will put you out of the synagogues. Indeed, the hour is coming when whoever kills you will think he is offering service to God. 3* *And they will do these things because they have not known the Father, nor me. 4* *But I have said these things to you, that when their hour comes you may remember that I told them to you.”* The Spirit helps believers passing through afflictions remain faithful by reminding us that tribulations are not strange but are to be expected. He *“bring[s] to your remembrance all that I have said to you,”* said Jesus. This, of course, is the purpose of prophecy: to strengthen those going through trials by assuring them that God has ordained those trials as part of His plan for our ultimate good. By telling us ahead of time that tribulations are coming, and reminding us of those prophecies when we are going through them, Christ guards His

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people against discouragement, hopelessness and overwhelming fear. The Spirit helps us in tribulation.

[APPLICATIONS] What are some things to take away from this passage as we, like Christ’s disciples, go about in a rapidly deteriorating “post Christian” world? I can think of three:

1. We can be sure the gospel we have believed is true because the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit all bear witness to its certainty through the eyewitness accounts of our Lord’s apostles. In an age of uncertainty about what is true, the Spirit of Truth bears final, indispensable witness to the truth about Jesus through Christ’s church. We have been granted the gift of certainty in an uncertain world, enabling us to be “salt and light” in a lost and confused generation. Thank God for the sure and certain hope of the gospel.

2. The same faith that brings us the grace of salvation, brings us the grace of perseverance. As we continue to trust and obey, the Spirit helps us in our weakness – weakness caused by our incompleteness until Christ’s returns to restore all things. Our jar of clay exterior needs the strength and assurance that comes from the work in our hearts of God’s Spirit. Thank God not only for our saving, but also for our keeping by the work of God’s word and Spirit.

3. We are granted the grace to endure persecution, trials, afflictions, and tribulations by calling to mind, with the Spirit’s help, the things our Bibles tell us to expect as we await the return of the Lord. Prophecy is given to us for our encouragement and sustenance. As we read our Bibles and realize that the world we are living in appears increasingly ripe for the return of Jesus, we calm our hearts, remembering Christ’s words, *“I have said these things to you, that when their hour comes you may remember that I told them to you.”* Thank God for the encouragement of Bible prophecy.

**Conclusion:** All these good gifts, the certainty of the gospel, persevering grace, and prophetic encouragement, are administered for our benefit by the Holy Spirit. We should often remind ourselves that we have not been left alone in this world. Our Lord Jesus has asked the Father to pour out His Spirit on the Church, and the Father has been pleased to comply. The power of God is with us as we face tomorrow. Who could ask for any greater help?