



VILLAGE BIBLE CHURCH

SUGAR GROVE CAMPUS

Help is on the Way!

The Gospel of John

John 14:15–31

Tim Badal | April 10, 2022

We're in John 14, in a series we've simply entitled "The Gospel of John." This is a biography of Jesus written by one of His closest friends, the Apostle John who has a threefold purpose for writing his Gospel.

He wants people to meet Jesus and then get to know Him through His miracles and message. John also wants his readers to put their faith, trust and hope in Jesus as their Savior and Lord.

Now we've reached what I consider to be the darkest hour in this entire Gospel. Back in chapter 13, Jesus took His disciples to the upper room. It was Holy Week in Jerusalem, and they were gathered on what is called Maundy Thursday. It was on this day that Jesus instituted the Lord's Supper. The word "maundy" literally means mandate. On that day, Jesus gave His followers a new mandate—a new commandment—that His disciples should love one another.

The reason this hour was dark was because during the meal, Jesus told His disciples that He would be leaving them. It was also at this time that Judas was preparing to betray Jesus, turning Him over to the local authorities. The hour was dark because it was the time of Jesus' pending death. As a result, the disciples felt beat up and broken. Their hopes were being dashed and their expectations were confused. They began to feel great fear and despair. That's why in John 14:1, Jesus specifically told them, "*Let not your hearts be troubled...*"

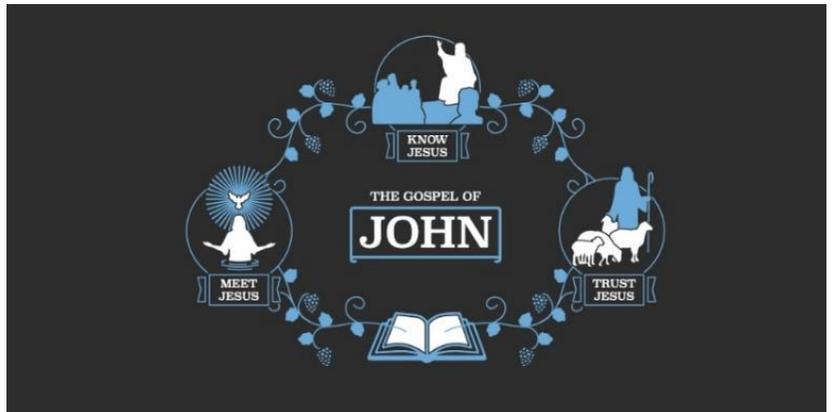
Let's face it. Some of us here are living in a time of trouble as well. We feel shell-shocked. It's as though we have bought into the hype of Jesus, only to be let down. We're confused. We feel more like losers than winners. Not only does Jesus reassure us in John 14:1, He says it again in verse 27, "*Let not your hearts be troubled...*" We of course might respond, "How are we supposed to do this? We appreciate the Hallmark card promise, but how can this really happen? Where is our hope?"

We can find His answer to our anxiety and despair in verse 16. He says, "*I will ask the Father, and he will give you another Helper.*" The word "another" means "in the same manner." The Helper will be like Jesus. He is the Holy Spirit, the third person of the Trinity, Who is equal and co-eternal with the Father and the Son. In other words, God will be sent to us in a different person and will be able to help us in ways that Jesus couldn't. He later told His disciples that because the Helper was coming, they would be able to do greater things in His name than He even did, because the Holy Spirit would dwell within them.

The word "Helper" is the Greek word *parakletos*. This literally means one who comes alongside another. The ESV translates this Helper which is a great translation. The Spirit comes alongside us to help us. It can also be translated in other ways. The Amplified Bible expands the meaning by saying this: "*And I will ask the Father, and He will give you another Helper (Comforter, Advocate, Intercessor—Counselor, Strengtheners, Standby).*" This translation helps us better understand the full meaning of *parakletos*. All of these words are valid ways to explain the role of God the Spirit in our lives.

When He comes to indwell us, He will help us, comfort us and advocate for us. He will also counsel and strengthen us. He will stand by us. Let's consider what this means for us specifically.

First, the Spirit comes to our aid. Have you ever had your car break down and you're on the side of the road? Let's say it's before we had cell phones. Back then you would just sit there, hoping and maybe praying that someone would stop. You needed



someone to join you in your trouble and give you a helping hand. The Holy Spirit sees us in our distress and doesn't just zoom on by; He stops, enters into our pain and He helps us. He is our Helper.

Likewise, the Spirit is our Comforter. When we're troubled or hurting or broken, this Helper comes and consoles us. He comes alongside and ministers to us in our greatest hours of need.

But in addition to being our Helper and Comforter, the Spirit is also an Advocate. *Parakletos* is a legal term. If you as an accused person have to go before a righteous judge, you need a *parakletos* to represent you to the authorities. The Holy Spirit literally intercedes for us, speaking on our behalf to a righteous God. We cannot speak for ourselves, because we are sinful people. We need Someone who is holy to come alongside and advocate for us.

The Spirit is also our Counselor. He guides and leads us, giving us words of wisdom and instruction. He also corrects us, showing us things that need to be removed from our lives and things that need to be added. Some of us need the Holy Spirit to counsel us.

Finally, the Spirit is our Strengthener, our Standby. When you work out physically, you need someone to "spot" you. You need someone to stand beside you, encouraging you to take on the big weights. You might not be sure you can do it. The spotter not only encourages you, he also is there to make sure the weight doesn't kill you. Some of you today are trying to live life on your own, but without a spotter, the weight is all on you. You might be screaming, asking for help to lift the weight off your chest. The Holy Spirit is beside you, offering to spot you.

So the Spirit is our Helper, our Comforter, our Strengthener and Standby. He's our Advocate and Counselor. Bottom line, the Spirit is the greatest gift Jesus could ever give us. He actually comes to live within us. And when the *Parakletos* comes to us, He helps us in three specific ways.

The Spirit helps us to be holy.

The Holy Spirit actually empowers us to do three important things.

The Spirit empowers us to believe the right things.

Let's think about the word 'empowers.' It literally means to equip, to resource and to allow. It does things you are not able to do on your own. Within your spiritual life you can accomplish nothing apart from the Spirit. You cannot accomplish a single thing for God and His Kingdom apart from the working of the Holy Spirit within you.

This requires that we ask ourselves, "How involved is the Holy Spirit in my life?" If you haven't ever thought about this, you're probably missing the greatest gift Jesus gives His followers. You received the Holy Spirit at the moment of salvation. You have been baptized in that Spirit, indwelt with that Spirit. Now the question is: will you be filled with that Spirit on an ongoing basis?

The Spirit is there to empower you to do things you couldn't do on your own, the first one being to believe the right things. Notice verse 17, where the Spirit is called "*the Spirit of truth.*" This doesn't mean that the Spirit is bringing a new truth. Remember, Jesus told His followers, "*I am the way, the truth, and the life*" (John 14:6). Now when the Holy Spirit comes, is He a different truth? It's not that the Spirit Himself is a proposition of truth. Rather, He reminds us of the truth of Jesus, then empowers us to believe that truth, to identify the truth, to pursue and accept the truth. He gives us the ability to discern truth from falsehood, right from wrong. The Holy Spirit confirms to us that Jesus is the only way, so to pursue any other answer besides Jesus would be foolish.

One way to explain this would be this. You're walking the streets of a major town—let's say New York City. There's a man with a little card table with three cards on the table. This man is going to scam you out of your money through a game called "Three Card Monte." He will show you the three cards. One will be the queen, the other two will be numbered cards. He says, "Put your money on the table. I'm going to start moving the cards around and you'll get one chance to choose the queen." As he's doing that, he points over here and over there. He might have a friend bump into you. There will be all kinds of tactics to throw you off so you can't follow where the queen is.

To apply this to our lives, you and I are living in a world that's telling us where we can find true happiness, contentment and joy, then immediately there are distractions. Finally, the cards are laid out before us and we need to pick one of the three, guessing which is the queen, but we have no idea. We're confused. We've been deceived, yet we have to make a choice.

The Holy Spirit is in us and He tells us, "Listen, it's the one on the left. I want to lead you to truth. It's the one on the left. Don't fall for all those distractions. Don't fall for all the counterfeits. You need to choose this one." How does He do this? Well, He starts with the Scriptures. Specifically, as we see in verses 15 and 22, He leads us to the commandments of Jesus. In other words, the Holy Spirit's job is to be a heavenly post-it note, continually reminding us of what Jesus has taught. As Jesus said to His disciples in verse 26, the Spirit *"...will bring to your remembrance all that I have said to you."*

Now, this doesn't mean we can be on cruise control, never opening our Bible or spending time in prayer, just assuming that through some kind of spiritual osmosis, we're going to know the truth and that the Spirit will give it to us in our hour of need. No, that's not how it works. Rather, we must walk with Jesus, talk with Jesus and do all the disciples did. Because Jesus is not physically with us, the Holy Spirit reminds us of the truths of Scripture.

The Spirit empowers us to behave the right way.

Not only does the Spirit enable us to believe the right things, He also helps us behave the right way. Four times in our text today—verses 15, 21, 23 and 24—we see references to keeping Christ's commandments or His word. The word "keep" is important. It means the Holy Spirit is taking possession of the commands of Scripture, even when we're unwilling to do this. He takes what we need to know about Jesus and holds on to it so we don't lose it.

How many parents have held on to your kids' valuable possessions because they're prone to lose them? The Holy Spirit says, "The precious things Christ has given you, I don't fully trust you to hang on to them. Because you're finite and sinful, I'll keep these things so you don't lose them. Then I'll help you remember them when you need them."

How does that work if we're living a life of sin? Jesus tells a story in Luke 15 about a father who has two sons. The father is wealthy, so the younger son asks the father for his inheritance. He goes to a far-off land and pursues a life of sin. You would think the father would have no interest in his son anymore. The son was completely selfish and rebellious. At the height of the son's rebellion, a light bulb comes on. The text tells us he "remembered his father's house." Brothers and sisters, when the Holy Spirit is within us, even in our darkest hour of sin, the Spirit will speak to us and the light bulb will go on. We will remember God and what He has done for us.

How do we make sure that ministry is taking place? Look at verse 17: *"...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."* For us to believe and behave the right way, the Holy Spirit needs to be in our lives.

The Spirit helps to bring us true happiness.

I believe with all my heart that the Spirit also helps us in a second way by bringing us happiness. Jesus said in John 10:10, *"I came that they may have life and have it abundantly."* He later explains that this abundant life—a life consistent with God's goodness in our lives—is to be found through keeping His commands. If the Holy Spirit is the One Who empowers and equips us to keep Christ's commands, and if by keeping His commands we can receive the abundant and happy life, then the Holy Spirit is the key to our happiness. But in order for that to happen, we need to do some things.

This happiness comes by hanging out with Him.

First, we need to hang out with the Spirit. I wonder if one of the disciples who was with Jesus that day was thinking back to John 10 and thinking, "I don't feel like my life is abundant. You preached this great idea, then Judas has betrayed You and the authorities are coming, You're talking about leaving, now You're talking about dying. All I feel is trouble and discontentment. I feel like we're being left without hope."

Jesus tells them, "Although the world doesn't know about this gift I'm going to give you, you will know Him." In other words, the disciples were being promised a happiness that the world would not understand. They would try to find it, but they couldn't. What Jesus is saying to us is that we can have true happiness because the Holy Spirit dwells with us and will be in us (verse 17).

This indwelling Spirit would be totally different than just walking beside Jesus. Jesus was with them and dwelled with them, but He wasn't in them. The Holy Spirit is like having Jesus, not just beside you, but within you. You have more of Jesus through the Spirit than the disciples did when they walked alongside Him.

Now, you may be thinking, “Wait a minute. What does it feel like to have the Spirit of God living inside me?” In order to hang out with the Spirit we have to give Him a place to dwell in us. We have to make Him a home in our lives. Think about it this way. I realize you don’t have any place to go, so I invite you into my home, telling you that my house is your house. Then I add, “Here are the ground rules. Don’t touch my TV. Don’t touch my refrigerator. The bathrooms are off limits. And if you think you can use any of the tools in my garage, you’ve got another thing coming.” How “at home” are you going to feel? Not much at all.

Can I contend this morning that some of us are doing that with the Holy Spirit? We sing the hymn, “Have Thine own way, Lord, have Thine own way. Thou art the potter, I am the clay.” But then we add, “Holy Spirit, stay out of my entertainment. Stay out of my checkbook. Stay out of my computer. Stay out of my calendar. Stay out of my circle of friends. Stay out of what I say or what I do. But have Your way. Make Yourself at home in my life. Enjoy the home.”

Some of you have said to the Holy Spirit, “That closet that has a bunch of padlocks that my wife and kids don’t even know about. My boss and my church and my small group don’t know about them either. You stay out of that as well. But have Your place.”

Do you see the imbalance in this? Some of us are inviting the Holy Spirit in, but closing off major parts of our lives. Then we have the audacity to sing and believe that He will make His dwelling in us. It won’t happen. Because of that, we wonder why we’re troubled, why we’re not at peace. We wonder why we’re filled with dread.

I like what one preacher said regarding hanging out with the Spirit: “The Spirit-filled souls are ablaze for God. They love with a love that glows. They serve with a faith that kindles. They serve with a devotion that consumes. They hate sin with fierceness that burns.”

How much do you hate the sin in your life because all it does is put a “Do not enter” sign on parts of your home? Do you hate it so much that you long for the Holy Spirit to be part of every detail of your life? Do you hate any sin that would keep Him from having full rein? You and I will never be truly happy until we allow the Holy Spirit into every part of our lives.

The disciples were probably thinking, “That’s great, Jesus, but You’re leaving. We need You. We’re troubled.” That’s why He had to keep repeating, “*Let not your hearts be troubled...*” Then look at what He said in verse 27: “*Peace I leave with you; my peace I give to you. Not as the world gives do I give to you. Let not your hearts be troubled, neither let them be afraid.*”

So yes, the Holy Spirit leads us to happiness when we hang out with Him—which is something the disciples hadn’t done yet. And if you’re troubled today, I would connect that to your lack of dwelling in the Holy Spirit. Jesus tells us that with the Holy Spirit comes peace. He promised to give them peace, which Paul later described as passing all understanding and that would guard our hearts and minds in Christ Jesus (Philippians 4:7).

This happiness comes by holding on to Him.

When you are hanging out with the Spirit, you are then able to hold on to the Spirit when you come across life’s troubled waters. The word “peace” that Jesus declared to the troubled hearts of the disciples is the exact same word Jesus used to calm the stormy waters. He is promising us that the same calming peace to come into our lives when the waters are troubled. Max Lucado put it this way: “You have a God Who hears you. You have the power of love behind you. You have the Holy Spirit within you. You have all of heaven ahead of you. You have a Shepherd. Therefore, you have grace for every sin, direction for every turn, a candle for every corner and an anchor for every soul.”

In short, we have everything we need. Why? Because we have the peace that Jesus gives us, which is not like the peace the world can provide. It’s a peace that transcends all understanding. So why are we troubled and anxious? Why are we discontent? Why are we downcast and brokenhearted? God has put within us the gift of the Holy Spirit. If we will fan that into a flame, then nothing will take us down.

The Spirit helps to bring us home.

The Holy Spirit helps make us holy and as the *parakletos*, He helps bring us happiness. Finally, the Holy Spirit helps bring us home. Earlier in John 14, Jesus said He was going to prepare a place for us and while He is away preparing that place, He has given us something to be busy with. When He left, He gave us a twofold assignment: to become like Him, so that the world might see Him. He told us to go and make disciples in a lost and needy world (Matthew 28:18-20). While He prepares a place in glory, we need to prepare our place here for glory as well. That way, when Jesus returns, He will find us faithful and true to Him. But we cannot do

these things apart from the Holy Spirit. Yet with the Holy Spirit, God will be faithful to bring us from where He started with us to the place where we become complete.

Paul says in Philippians 1:6, *“And I am sure of this, that he who began a good work in you will bring it to completion at the day of Jesus Christ.”* God the Father isn't doing this work. God the Son isn't doing that work. It is the Holy Spirit Who does it. Even though we rarely give Him credit for this, He is the One Who guarantees that we will be ready to meet our Maker one day.

This means we must stop acting like helpless orphans.

If this true, then notice what Jesus says in verse 18: *“I will not leave you as orphans.,,”* What are orphans like? They're troubled and anxious. They doubt. They are determined to take care of themselves on their own. Jesus has not left us as orphans, but has instead put His Spirit within us. In fact, we have the same power that raised Christ from the dead at our disposal at all times and in every circumstance.

If this is true, why is it that we act like losers instead of victors? Why do we act like orphans, as if there is no God, instead of realizing that because of the indwelling Spirit, no weapon formed against us can prosper (Isaiah 54:17)? Is it because we're strong, or is it because we have within us the Spirit Who is greater than the spirit that is in the world?

We need to begin to act like victors, rather than losers. We need to act like conquerors, not like those who are defeated. Because we have the Spirit of God, we are the sons and daughters of the most high God. We're not helpless orphans without any strength.

This means we must start living with heavenly optimism.

We not only need to stop living like orphans, but there's also another way in which we need to start living. Specifically, we must start living with heavenly optimism. In verses 28-29 we read:

²⁸ You heard me say to you, 'I am going away, and I will come to you.' If you loved me, you would have rejoiced, because I am going to the Father, for the Father is greater than I. ²⁹ And now I have told you before it takes place, so that when it does take place you may believe.

Jesus was about to die. Now think about what He said. He promised them—and us—that He would come back. This promise is true, as we'll be reminded this coming week. The promise Jesus made on that Thursday remained true on Friday and Saturday, because of Sunday.

The same Jesus Who told us He was going to prepare a place for you and me also said He would one day come back to take us with Him. That means whatever we're struggling with today, we can have hope, joy and peace, because the One Who promised is faithful. Because the Holy Spirit lives within us, you and I should live with a heavenly optimism. No matter the turmoil, no matter the difficulties, the One Who said He was going to die also promised He would come back. So we walk in the Spirit. We're filled with the Spirit until that day. We delight in the Spirit.

We're reminded of this truth by Charles Haddon Spurgeon, “Without the Spirit, we can do nothing. We are ships without wind, chariots without steeds. We're like branches without sap. We're withered. Like coals without fire, we are useless. It's as if we are offerings without the sacrificial flame. We are unaccepted.”

Have you received the gift of the Holy Spirit? It can be found in a relationship with Jesus Christ. It is the greatest gift Jesus will ever give those whom He saves. If you have not found Jesus, then you cannot have the Holy Spirit, and apart from Him, you and I will do nothing. So let us receive the Spirit through the Savior and let us live, walk and dwell with that Spirit, so that everything we say and do will bring glory to the great name of our Father in heaven. Amen?