

Series: The Person and Work of the Holy Spirit

Message One: *The Who, What, When and Why of the Holy Spirit*

We are taking the next four weeks and adding an "addendum" to our Study in the Book of Acts that we just completed. *And I want to tell you why...*

When we consider what happened in the Book of Acts, how the church engaged the culture of the day, how they lived to share the good news of Jesus, how they experienced God in daily life...honesty compels us acknowledge: **there is a massive gap between the life they lived then...and the life we live today.**

On the whole, they were less educated, had less money, fewer possessions, zero technology, and few of the freedoms you and I experience in our day.

And yet...when a group of Christians arrived in the town of Thessalonica, the Thessalonians cried out... "These men who have turned the world upside down have come here also..." **(Acts 17:6)**

How is it that God's people in one era "turn the world upside down" – and in another, *the world turns God's people upside down?*

In John 13-16, we are listening in to a private meal Jesus is having with his disciples, it is the very night He will be betrayed...within 24 hours Jesus will be dead on a cross. The meal has been one piece of bad news after another....

- One of you is going to betray Me
- Peter, you will deny Me three times
- And *all of you will desert Me*

And then the crushing blow...Jesus tells them **"I'm leaving you...and where I'm going you can't come right now..."**

The five passages we are going to look at are known as the "Paraclete Passages"... it is not an exaggeration for me to say that understanding and applying what Jesus tells us in these texts is the difference between "turning the world upside down" or being "turned upside down" by it. **(John 14:16–17, 25-26; 15:26–27; 16:7–11, 12–15)**

The Paraclete Passages in the Upper Room Discourse

1. John 14:16-17

That word "Helper" is the Greek word "pah RAH clay tose" – "paraclete." A "paraclete" is one "who comes alongside." However, scholars agree that the word is in a sense untranslatable – so you will see as we move through these passages it

will be translated, **Counselor, Helper, Advocate, Comforter**...depending on the Bible you are reading from.

Barclay helps us get at the essence of the word: He tells us that a "paraclete" is "someone who is called in" – called in to bear witness in court proceedings, called in to advocate on behalf of someone, called in to plead a cause, called in to advise, called in to strengthen and encourage.

He writes, Always a *paraklētos* is someone called in to help in time of trouble or need.¹

Two things we take from this passage. First, based on the pronouns used, tell me this. Is this "paraclete" a thing or a person. "He" is a person. Don't miss or under appreciate this. I am a person. This podium is a thing. Name some differences between the two...

A Person:

Living being

Mind, affections, desires, will

Made for relationship

Value in *being*

A Thing:

Lifeless object

Lifeless object

Made to be used

Value in utility

May we never refer to the Spirit as an "it" – He is a person, a living being.

Secondly, the prepositions "with" and "in" tell us that this person is not just in "proximity", He is actually "in" us. Cannot be closer than being "in" us.

1. The Helper is a person
2. The Helper is with and in us

2. John 14:25-26

So, the "Helper" is the Holy Spirit, sent from the Father "in the name" of Jesus. Meaning, the sending of the Holy Spirit is secured, in accord with the person and work and character of Jesus.

And we are now in the reality of *the Trinity*. That our God is One God in three persons. One in essence, three in person. The Father is not the Son, nor the Spirit. The Son is not the Father or the Spirit. The Spirit is not the Son or the Father. But the Father, Son and Spirit are equally and fully God.

And if your brain is not aching trying to grasp that, then your concept of God is less than the Bible reveals. And if it is less than the Bible reveals, then our concept of God is an idol...and not the Triune God of the Scripture.

Three things we take from this text...

¹ Barclay, W. (Ed.). (1975). [The Gospel of John](#) (Vol. 2, pp. 166–167). Philadelphia, PA: Westminster John Knox Press.

3. The Helper is the Holy Spirit
4. The Holy Spirit is fully God
5. The Holy Spirit teaches and reminds us of the words of Jesus

Now, let's be careful how we apply this. These words of Jesus were to the original twelve, He is not speaking to the crowds. And it is this promised work of the Holy Spirit that has given us the New Testament we hold in our hands, the very words of Jesus we are reading right now. That is the *immediate application*. However, now having the words of Jesus, the Spirit's work in you and me is in a sense the same – He, the Spirit, teaches us and He brings to our minds, the Words of Jesus *given to us in the Scripture*.

3. John 15:26-27

The Spirit "testifies" about Jesus – The Spirit tells, proclaims, speaks and explains Jesus. And, Jesus includes a command (imperative) "you will tell, proclaim speak and explain me to others."

6. The Holy Spirit tells others about Jesus *and so do we*.

4. John 16:7

I have a terrible memory, don't have really clear recollections of a lot of childhood or adolescence. I do however remember the last time I got a spanking...

And I remember those fateful words as I was about to get spanked... "Son, this hurts me more than it hurts you."

Of course, like every kid of my generation, I'm thinking this makes absolutely no sense in the world!!

Likewise – there is simply no way, in the minds of the disciples, **that Jesus' leaving is to their advantage**.

Captured in other translations...

John 16:7 (NLT)

⁷But in fact, *it is **best** for you that I go away*, because if I don't, the Advocate won't come. If I do go away, then I will send him to you.

John 16:7 (NIV)

⁷But very truly I tell you, *it is **for your good** that I am going away*. Unless I go away, the Advocate will not come to you; but if I go, I will send him to you.

John 16:7 (The Message)

⁷So let me say it again, this truth: ***It's better for you that I leave.*** If I don't leave, the Friend won't come. But if I go, I'll send him to you.

So, Jesus' "going" means someone "coming" who is "**better, best, for our good.**"

7. The Holy Spirit ***in us*** IS BETTER than Jesus incarnate ***with us.***

When Jesus took on human flesh, becoming fully human, even as he remained fully God – He will now, never for all eternity be without His body. While Jesus "glorified body" could walk through walls...as He did when He surprised the disciples after His resurrection...the fact remains, *person with a body can only be in one place at one time.*

Burton Sanders is my doctor....only in one place at one time. Trouble at Concord Road house...Burton cannot be in two places.

But if Burton were physically standing here, but all that Burton is – his skill, learning, knowledge, strength, insight, mysteriously resided in someone who was in that house on Concord Rd...they could save that life....not "fantasy"...biblical...spirits are real, the spiritual world is real as the physical.

We need all that Jesus is to help us, to think with our minds, to shape our affections and desires, to enable our words and hands to give life. But Jesus has a body...and cannot be "in me." But by the Person of the Holy Spirit... He can be in and with me!!!

5. John 16:12-15

The Holy Spirit is "the Spirit of Truth." That is, there is no untruth, no error, no falsehood. The "truth" in this statement is not "truth" in the sense of laws and principles of the universe – but notice it is **THE** truth...that is the truth about Jesus, His person, His work of redeeming us.

Importantly, the Spirit has no agenda of His own, but Himself is listening to the Father and Son. This is beautifully described in that phrase, "*He will glorify Me.*"

OK, nine things we take from the five "Paraclete Passages" of the upper room discourse...

1. The Helper is a Person
2. The Helper is *with us* and *in us*
3. The Helper is the Holy Spirit
4. The Holy Spirit is fully God
5. The Holy Spirit *teaches* and *reminds* us of the words of Jesus
6. The Holy Spirit *tells others* about Jesus and so do we
7. The Holy Spirit *in us* is better than Jesus incarnate *with us*
8. The Holy Spirit guides us into all the truth about Jesus

9. The Holy Spirit glorifies Jesus

In John 19, post resurrection, Jesus finds the disciples holed up somewhere, doors shut “for fear of the Jews.” In other words, they understood, “if the Jews did that to Jesus...why would they not do the same to us who followed Him...if they find us.” I totally get it.

Yet, as the Book of Acts unfolds, we find these same “fearful” disciples on the streets of Jerusalem preaching to the very people that they are hiding from? And throughout the course of Acts...they only become more emboldened, and they never retreat!!

What accounts for the radical change???

Those nine statements we are looking at.