

Another Helper

John 14:15-17

The Holy Spirit. There is a book by Francis Chan on the Holy Spirit, and do you know what he titled the book, *Forgotten God*. Unfortunately, as Christians, we do not spend enough study time or thought on the Spirit throughout our day as much as we should, I myself am included. Sure, we all have heard about God and we all have heard about Jesus and we strive to learn more about them, as we should. We should never stop learning about them; but if we neglect to study the Holy Spirit and recognize His impact in our life, we only have 2/3 of the equation.

This morning, my hope is that your curiosity will be sparked. That from this morning, you will start thinking about the Holy Spirit; that when you read Scripture, you notice God, Jesus *and* the Holy Spirit; that you look for Him in your daily life and routine, speaking frequently with the Spirit. Remember Ephesians 6, we have to put on the armor of God, the sword of the Spirit, which is the Word of God. Who wrote the Bible? The Holy Spirit. And we are to be praying at all times in the Spirit. Did you know that the Spirit intercedes on our behalf in our prayers? Romans 8:26 “Likewise the Spirit helps us in our weakness. For we do not know what to pray for as we ought, but the Spirit himself intercedes for us with groanings too deep for words.”

We pray for things *we think* we need but the Spirit intercedes before God on our behalf to ask for the things *we really do* need.

The Spirit has more impact in our life than we can ever imagine. If we are seeking God, we will seek to understand the Holy Spirit. Here is a taste at the importance of the Holy Spirit. A quote from J.I. Packer “The Christian’s life in all its aspects – intellectual and ethical, devotional and relational, upsurging in worship and outgoing in witness – is supernatural; only the Spirit can initiate and sustain it. So apart from him, not only will there be no lively believers and no lively congregations, there will be no believers and no congregations at all.”

Strong words. But it shows the importance of the Holy Spirit in our lives. Verse 15. “If you love me, you will keep my commandments.”

My first point this morning is that true justification always generates a response of obedience. Justification means that your past, present and future sins are wiped clean and that you are given the righteousness of Christ through his work on the cross. Because of the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ on the cross, a child of God is made clean and their penalty has been paid for. And stemming from justification, a believer’s response will always be to obey what Jesus has commanded. We will still sin because we are not perfect however, the process of sanctification will be taking place. Sanctification is simply, becoming more like Christ every day. Sanctification always flows automatically and necessarily out of justification. If you have been justified by Christ, you will become more like Christ every day. If we love Jesus, we will obey Jesus. And flip it, if we do not obey Jesus and what He commands, that is evidence that no matter what we say, there is no love for Christ in our hearts. That is what Jesus just said. IF you love me, you WILL keep MY commandments. Genuine love for Jesus manifests itself in obedience to His commandments.

In life, we obey what we believe and who we serve. As a child, you obey your parents because you believe that if you don’t, there will be consequences. As we grow up, this principle still applies no matter what our age. You will act and obey based on who you serve and who you follow. This verse should make all of us take an inward, self-inventory. Take a look at last week, go through each day as best as you can and ask yourself, in my words

and actions, was I obeying Jesus commands that are found within Scripture? And if there are moments where you failed, you can't go back and change them, you can only move forward starting today, starting right now and if possible, go make things right and seek forgiveness. Because your reaction to those moments that God reveals to you will tell you where your heart is. It all boils down to your love for Jesus, because if you love Jesus, you will obey what He has said. And dare I say, if we do not obey Jesus intentionally, or intentionally disobey Jesus' commands, then we do not have love for Jesus in our hearts.

You have heard me say these words a lot and you will continue to hear me speak them to you, our orthopraxy reveals our orthodoxy. Actions show us what we truly believe. This is exactly what Jesus said to us in verse 15, if you love me, you will keep my commandments. Period. Simple. There is no other way to interpret that. That is as black and white as you can get.

Verse 16

And I will ask the Father, and he will give you another Helper, to be with you forever, even the Spirit of truth

Here in the ESV translation we see the word Helper. In the NLT, we see the word Advocate, in the KJV, we see the word Comforter, and, in the RSV, we see the word Counselor. In all of these translations, the word used is capitalized, why? Because it's a name. Jesus just named a person and that person is the 3rd person of the Trinity, the Holy Spirit. Throughout Scripture, there are numerous names for God, Jesus and the Holy Spirit. Here is one example of that. The Spirit is our Helper, but what does He help us with? The original Greek word in Scripture is *parakletos*, and its where we get our English word paraclete. A paraclete is someone you called to come alongside you and help you in your defense, such as in a court room. It was your defense attorney, which is why I personally like the word Advocate the best for this verse. Comforter can be misleading due to our modern understanding of that word. When the KJV wrote comforter, they were pulling the word comforter from the closely translated word in Latin, not Greek. But the Latin word used here refers to someone that would come to you "with strength". Yes, it is very true that the Spirit comforts you and wipes away your tears after battle, but in this verse, Jesus is saying that this Comforter will come and give you the strength for the battle. And don't think when you read the word counselor of a high school guidance counselor or a psychologist. That is not the right interpretation of the word. Jesus says that another Helper or Advocate will come to defend you, intercede for you, and give you strength for the battle.

But you might be sitting there thinking, but isn't that what Jesus does for us? Yes. Because look at the word before Helper, ANOTHER! And he will give you ANOTHER HELPER. This is my second point this morning. Jesus did not say, and he will give you THE helper, but Jesus said another Helper. The word 'another' means that there was one before and who came to this earth before the Spirit, Jesus! Jesus was the original paraclete, the original Helper, the original Advocate.

1 John 2:1 says "My little children, I am writing these things to you so that you may not sin. But if anyone does sin, we have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous." Jesus is our Advocate, our Helper, our Counselor and its for this very reason that Jesus spoke of the Spirit as ANOTHER helper. See, following Jesus' departure from this world, the Spirit would come to continue the exact ministry that Jesus started. It's as if Jesus said "I'm not going to leave you helpless. I'm praying to the Father that He will send you One who comes with strength to help you when you're called before magistrates and when death is threatening you. He will help you stand by the power of God." The Spirit replaces Jesus' physical presence on this earth by permanently indwelling His followers.

Jesus also calls the Holy Spirit the Spirit of truth. It is the Holy Spirit who wrote the Bible. It is the Holy Spirit who illuminates the Bible. It is the Holy Spirit who applies the truth of the Word of God with power, as to cut between bone and marrow, as Hebrews 4:12 states. It is the Holy Spirit who exposes falsehood. If you get anything out of listening to a sermon or singing worship or praying or in a bible study, it is 100% the Holy Spirit working in you to reveal the truth of God's Word.

What we must believe and fully accept is that God is truth. Look at John 14:6 “Jesus said to him, “I am the way, and the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me.” This is a verse I can’t wait to fully preach on because it is deeper than you can imagine. But in it, Jesus clearly says, I am the truth. Because Jesus is God, part of the Trinity, what applies to Jesus also applies to God and the Holy Spirit. What they speak is truth, always. Look at John 17:15-19 “15 I do not ask that you take them out of the world, but that you keep them from the evil one. 16 They are not of the world, just as I am not of the world. 17 Sanctify them in the truth; your word is truth. 18 As you sent me into the world, so I have sent them into the world. 19 And for their sake I consecrate myself, that they also may be sanctified in truth.” Jesus is asking the Father to sanctify us in truth, and that God’s Word is truth. Why, when we become a Christian, does God the Father, not take us out of this world? First of all, because Jesus asked Him not to.

But just as the Father sent Jesus into this world, so Jesus is sending us into the world. You didn’t become a Christian to enjoy a cushy life. God saved you to do His work! If you only come to church on Sunday and do nothing throughout the week to grow spiritually or serve your neighbor or your church, you missed the point! Jesus specifically asked God the Father to sanctify us in His truth to carry out God’s purpose and will. And the power that allows us to fulfill that purpose is the Spirit, who is also God. If we have the Holy Spirit inside of us this morning, we must ask ourselves, what are we doing with it? Who are we loving? Who are we having compassion and kindness towards? Who are we sharing the Gospel with? Who are we inviting to our house for a meal and fellowship? How am I serving God in his church to further His kingdom?

Third point this morning, verse 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.”

Not all will know the truth. Not everyone will be saved. Not everyone will have Jesus as their Lord and Savior. This is one verse that clearly rejects universalism. But again, look at the exact words used by Jesus. Jesus doesn’t say the world will not receive, or the world might not receive, both of which portray that man has the ultimate decision and control over the lives. No, Jesus says, and I looked at over 20 translations and they all say the same word, the world CANNOT receive. There is no possibility for those outside the elect, those who are not believers to receive the Spirit. Why? Jesus answers that too, because it neither sees him nor knows him. The world doesn’t recognize the sacrifice that Jesus made on the cross. The world does not recognize the Bible as the Word of God, breathed out by the Holy Spirit. The world does not recognize that sovereignty of God.

However, Jesus contrasts this right away by says “you know him, for he dwells with you and will be in you.” Everyone who is born again is given the knowledge of saving grace. Your understanding of Jesus’ death on the cross to pay your penalty for sin and justify you before God, only came to you through the working of the Holy Spirit. And then, as I mentioned earlier, sanctification is the daily process that occurs in the life regenerated by the Spirit. And where does Jesus say the Spirit will be? He dwells with us, in our midst, all around us but also, inside us. The Spirit, after our regeneration in the Spirit, after we are born again, takes up residence inside our heart, soul, and mind. That is why if we call ourselves a Christian, a born-again Christian, but do not obey the commands of Jesus, do we actually love Jesus? If the Spirit truly lives in us, we will become more like Jesus everyday and the love of his commands will overtake all of who we are. It might not be immediately seen, such as, tomorrow, you might not break that sin in your life instantly, you might, but might not. What you should do is look at your life before you became a Christian and the thoughts and actions you had and did, and see where you are today. Or take an inventory of the last few years. Do you see a progression towards Christ and the things of God or are you in the same place or worse, gone backwards during that timeframe. Because according to Scripture, a true disciple of Christ moves towards Christ. If you are in the same sinful patterns with no change after your conversion, the logical question to follow is, were you actually reborn?

Now, I am not questioning anyone's salvation this morning, I am simply asking questions for you to evaluate yourself in order to help you move closer to God. It is my desire and passion to push you towards God, and to push in to your life and say things that you might not want to hear, but possibly may need to hear. I had the same experience this past week. I spoke with my mentor, friend and a brother in Christ that loves me and wants the best for me. He didn't tell me what I wanted to hear, he told me what I needed to hear. That is a true friend. I don't tell you what you want to hear, I pray to God that through me, God tells you what you need to hear.

I cannot do a one-off sermon on the Holy Spirit without talking about the chief office of the Holy Spirit. We could legitimately spend an entire year or more on the Holy Spirit and still not cover everything. The Holy Spirit has many duties but none as important as glorifying the son, Jesus Christ. Listen to Jesus' words (by the way, Jesus spoke our passage for this morning, John 14:15-17 and what I'm about to read in John 16:4-15 all in the upper room, moments before his death)

“4 But I have said these things to you, that when their hour comes you may remember that I told them to you. “I did not say these things to you from the beginning, because I was with you. 5 But now I am going to him who sent me, and none of you asks me, ‘Where are you going?’ 6 But because I have said these things to you, sorrow has filled your heart. 7 Nevertheless, I tell you the truth: it is to your advantage that I go away, for if I do not go away, the Helper will not come to you. But if I go, I will send him to you. 8 And when he comes, he will convict the world concerning sin and righteousness and judgment: 9 concerning sin, because they do not believe in me; 10 concerning righteousness, because I go to the Father, and you will see me no longer; 11 concerning judgment, because the ruler of this world is judged.

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.”

The Holy Spirit's main responsibility is to bring glory to the son, Jesus Christ. Of all the things that the Holy Spirit does, all of them have this end in mind, the glory of Jesus Christ. Simply put, what does not glorify Christ is not of the Holy Spirit, and what is of the Holy Spirit invariably glorifies our Lord Jesus Christ. In all that you do, ask yourself, does this glorify Christ? That is the test for all of our words and actions. And get this, sometimes, our weakness may even help to make way for the greater display of the might of God. When we confess to God our helplessness in the tasks that God has given to us, it opens the door for the Spirit to work all the more. The world says you need to go up; get that promotion, buy that new thing, look successful to your friends, have pride in yourself. But when we do that, God departs from us. Only in Christianity, when a Christian lowers himself and humbles himself, that's when God steps in and does things that we cannot. When we are conscious of our feebleness, then we see Christ's strength. What can a hammer do without the hand that grasps it, and what can we do without the Spirit of God?

When the Holy Spirit wants to glorify Christ, what does He do? First off, Christ needs no new revelation. The Holy Spirit does not reveal in these days any fresh laws or doctrines, he simply brings to mind the things that Christ Himself spoke. Revelation 22 says “18 I warn everyone who hears the words of the prophecy of this book: if anyone adds to them, God will add to him the plagues described in this book, 19 and if anyone takes away from the words of the book of this prophecy, God will take away his share in the tree of life and in the holy city, which are described in this book.” There has been no new revelation since John finished the book of Revelation back in 90 AD. Everything we need for life has been given to us already and found in the life and pages of Jesus Christ. And the main point behind it all is that Jesus, by dying and resurrecting from the grave, has killed death for all believers. This is the chief office of the Holy Spirit, to draw all our attention to Jesus and his work on the cross. There is no other objective that carries more weight. I think Spurgeon sums it up beautifully.

“As we journey on in life, we pass up hill and down dale, through bright sunlight and through dark shadows, and in each of these conditions, we learn a little more of Christ, a little more of His grace, a little more of His glory, a little more of His sin-bearing, a little more of His glorious righteousness.”

With the Holy Spirit dwelling within us, love and obedience to God’s Word is the only outcome. For us here at CBC, that means our church needs to be a place of peace, harmony and unity, all in one accord under the headship of Jesus Christ. All of us striving towards the same goals and moving in the same direction. Might I share my suggestion for everything this church does: Goal 1: what will bring God more glory? And Goal 2: Do what needs to be done to help grow God’s kingdom. If all of us work with those objectives in the forefront of our minds, there is no telling what God could do. We must all submit to God, confess our pride and serve him humbly. That it my prayer for myself and my prayer for this church. In ourselves, we will fail but if we rely on the Holy Spirit, we will find victory.

Let us try to abide under the influence of the Holy Spirit in all that we do.