**Truth**

John 16:12-15

I expect all of us here would say that ***we have heard of the Holy Spirit*** and would acknowledge that the Holy Spirit is a full member of the Trinity – Father, Son and Holy Spirit. But beyond that I bet we fall into two categories:

* Those who have been in charismatic/ Pentecostal circles where the Holy Spirit is more of a focus and
* Those who have not been in those circles much but have been taught to worry about them.

The first group – if you’ve worshiped and fellowshipped and served with more Pentecostal believers – ***may be a little confused by what you experienced***. Maybe you saw some remarkable, powerful, moving things. But mixed in you also saw some confusing, disturbing things too.

The second group – ***if you have never prayed with a charismatic*** or been to a Pentecostal revival, some aspects of the Holy Spirit may feel distant and mysterious to you: praying in faith, believing for miracles; listening for the voice of God for specific direction for yourself or someone else; worshiping with all of your heart and soul…

Are you catching in John 14-17 that ***Jesus was VERY concerned for His disciples to understand and anticipate the ministry of the Holy Spirit?***

“When the Spirit of truth comes, he will guide you into all the truth.” John 16:13

Last week we studied the first part of chapter sixteen and saw ***the Holy Spirit’s public ministry***: to convict the world of sin, righteousness and judgment. Now we see His private ministry, within the church, for the followers of Jesus.

You get into the kingdom of God by experiencing His public ministry as the Holy Spirit convicts you of sin, righteousness and judgment. Then, when you repent of your sins and put your faith in Jesus, **you receive the Holy Spirit as a gift** and He comes to live in your heart forever.

So if I asked you ***“Where is the Holy Spirit?”*** most of us would answer correctly, “He is in my heart.” The Spirit is not an “it” but a “he.” ***Not an impersonal power or force, like in Star Wars, but a PERSON.*** We don’t say “Use the Spirit, Luke.” It’s not respectful to use a person like you use a washing machine or computer.

***The Holy Spirit is a person with feelings***, identity, with desires and purposes. Someone you can grieve or please; someone you can listen to or ignore; someone you can walk with or walk away from.

Today we will see **three Names of the Holy Spirit** that correspond to His three activities in our lives. Let’s start in verse 12.

**The Names and Activities of the Holy Spirit:**

1. The Spirit of **Comfort** to be with us and help us

“I still have many things to say to you, but you cannot bear them now.” John 16:12

Jesus was so compassionate and understanding. ***He knew what the disciples could handle*** and that most things they were not yet ready to handle. “You cannot bear them now.” Even what Jesus had already told them they had largely not understood. Only after the fact, with the Holy Spirit helping them, did the gospel writers like Matthew and John get things on paper with accurate perspective.

And hear this, brother, sister – ***Jesus knows exactly what you can handle as well.*** He has things to say to YOU that you are not yet ready to bear. So He waits patiently, knowing the Spirit of Comfort will help you understand and apply them in time.

***At first what we need is COMFORT.*** We need to know that Jesus is with us in the person of the Holy Spirit. This is what He promised back in chapter 14.

**The Names and Activities of the Holy Spirit:**

1. The Spirit of **Comfort** to be with us and help us

“And I will ask the Father, and he will give you another Helper, to be with you forever.” John 14:16

As Jesus comforted the disciples regarding his impending departure he said twice, ***“Don’t let your hearts be troubled. Trust in God.”*** And he spoke peace over them. And the peace and comfort He promised would come through the Holy Spirit – The Helper.

The word there is **parakleton**, which simply means “the one who comes alongside.” Many translations use the word “Comforter.” The ESV went with Helper. The point is that Jesus was leaving, in order to die on the cross, rise again and then ascend to the Father’s right hand. Once he had accomplished those tasks, He promised to pour out the Holy Spirit on all of His followers.

That’s why he kept saying, “***It’s better for you that I go.*** Trust me, it’s better.” In his human body Jesus would not be able to be with all believers at all times. The Holy Spirit is not limited by a human body and so IS able to be with every one of us, everywhere. And where the Spirit is, there is comfort and peace.

**The Names and Activities of the Holy Spirit:**

1. The Spirit of **Comfort** to be with us and help us

“Even the Spirit of Truth… You know him for he dwells with you and will be in you.” John 14:17

The world does not know the Holy Spirit, but followers of Jesus do know Him. We know His presence and His voice; His conviction and guidance. He dwells in us and comforts us primarily with the fact of His presence.

Think of **what children want** when they wake up in the middle of the night. They want Mom and Dad. They just want to be with you; to be near you; to know you’re there. The bad dream drifts away. The fear of what’s in the closet or under the bed disappears. If Dad is here, I’m safe. If Mom is around, I can rest.

Think of how wonderfully true this is of God. **He is WITH YOU** every second of every day, everywhere. The Holy Spirit is always with you.

* You worry about a big test or presentation. God is with you.
* You stress about a hard conversation or difficult relationship. God is with you.
* You are concerned about the next doctor’s appointment and what the prognosis might be. God is with you.
* You don’t know what’s next in life, your plans are unclear. God is with you.
* You are dealing with a painful loss. God is with you.

And if you belong to Jesus by faith, ***YOU KNOW He is with you***. You feel that blessed assurance, that personal connection with God as your Father that only the Holy Spirit can provide. Romans 8 tells us that

1. The Spirit of **Comfort** to be with us and help us

**“**For you did not receive the spirit of slavery to fall back into fear, but you have received the Spirit of adoption as sons, by whom we cry, ‘Abba! Father!’ The Spirit himself bears witness with our spirit that we are children of God.” Romans 8:15-16

You feel that deep inner ***cry of the heart “Abba Father,”*** that peace and love of being accepted as a child of God, secure in His arms. The perfect love of God the Father drives out the fear of being alone, being rejected, being condemned in your sin.

The Holy Spirit comes alongside you, fills your heart and lets you know that He is with you.

Some of you need this reminder today. You feel alone; discouraged; rejected. You feel unworthy, unacceptable. Hear this. If you have surrendered your heart and life to Jesus, then you belong to the LORD! You have been adopted as a child of God. You are no longer defined by your failure and sin; you are no longer covered in guilt and shame. You have been forgiven, set free, adopted, accepted. ***You are more loved than you can possibly imagine!***

And God did all of that for you precisely so He could be with you – and you with Him – forever. The Holy Spirit is your deposit, your down payment, guaranteeing your full inheritance when Jesus comes back. He gives you a preview of the full glory that will be yours for eternity when you see Jesus face to face.

For now, you have Him in your heart to comfort, encourage and help you – to be with you. And the main job of the Holy Spirit is to direct your heart to the Lord Jesus.

1. The Spirit of **Comfort** to be with us and help us
   * Directing all glory to **the Lord Jesus**

“By this you know the Spirit of God: every spirit that confesses that Jesus Christ has come in the flesh is from God.” 1 John 4:2

We are explicitly instructed to test the spirits. Not all are from God. Some are from antichrist, John teaches us. The way to tell the difference is whether any “spirit” gives glory and praise to Jesus. The Holy Spirit does not draw attention to Himself. His purpose and priority is always to direct attention and worship to Jesus as Lord. Look back in John 16.

1. The Spirit of **Comfort** to be with us and help us
   * Directing all glory to **the Lord Jesus**

“He will glorify me, for he will take from what is mine and declare it to you.” John 16:14

Just as Jesus came to glorify the Father, so ***the Holy Spirit came to glorify Jesus.*** It’s a complete cycle, an infinite, unending circle of glory and worship.

So that’s a helpful test, if you ever do find yourself in a worship service or prayer meeting or Bible study with some charismatic brothers and sisters: does it all glorify Jesus? Does it lift up the name of Jesus as Lord? Or does it draw more attention to the pastor or leader? Is it really about raising money? Is it about creating some kind of emotional environment so it’s really about the people in the room, not the Lord they are supposedly there to worship?

And let’s be honest here – ***you don’t have to be Pentecostal to fall into those traps.*** Plenty of conservative, non-charismatic pastors draw attention to ourselves instead of Jesus sometimes; to our budgets and buildings instead of to Jesus; to our own plans and agendas instead of to His.

***So let’s use this as a test for OUR OWN HEARTS:*** do our prayer meetings and Bible studies focus on Jesus as King? Do they direct all the glory, honor and attention to HIM? That’s the work of the Holy Spirit!

*Oh Lord Jesus thank you for giving us your Holy Spirit to be with us, to comfort and to help us! Thank you, Holy Spirit, for always directing our worship to King Jesus, helping us to trust in Him, and to love Him with all of our hearts. Encourage each of us today with the reminder that we belong to you – you paid the price, Lord Jesus, for our adoption as children of God, so our hearts cry out “Abba Father,” as we rejoice in your great love and grace toward us. Thank you for always being with us through your wonderful Holy Spirit! In Jesus’ Name we pray, amen.*

**The Names and Activities of the Holy Spirit:**

1. The Spirit of **Truth** to teach us all things

“When the Spirit of truth comes, he will guide you into all truth.” John 16:13

The Holy Spirit is first of all the Spirit of COMFORT, second He is the Spirit of TRUTH who teaches us all things. What a promise we have here! “He will guide you into all truth.” This doesn’t mean that as soon as you get saved you will instantly understand everything. It means **you now have a GUIDE, a TUTOR**, living in your own heart and speaking to your mind. It’s like having a living highlighter as you read the Bible. ***The Holy Spirit illumines the Word of God*** and shows you what you need to see and hear and do for each day; assuming we pay attention!

Remember, **there is no separation between the Spirit of God and the Word of God** – the two work in perfect harmony, never pulling in opposite directions. If you sense a “spirit” leading you away from the worship of Jesus and away from faithfulness to the Word of God, you can know for sure that is not the Spirit of God. If you have an impression or feeling or inner sense that you should lie or cheat or steal or be selfish or exalt yourself – you can be sure that “guidance” is from your flesh or the world or the devil, not the Holy Spirit.

***The Word of God is our anchor and foundation*** – our light and our illumination – and the Holy Spirit uses Scripture to comfort us and to guide us into ALL TRUTH.

**The Names and Activities of the Holy Spirit:**

1. The Spirit of **Truth** to teach us all things
   * To understand the **Gospel** and God’s purposes

“For he will not speak on his own authority, but whatever he hears he will speak.”

John 16:13

***The Holy Spirit will not invent a new gospel*** or new purposes for God – He will help us understand and believe and apply and walk in the original good news of the Lord Jesus Christ. Paul wrote in Galatians 1, “If another supposed apostle or even an angel from heaven comes and preaches to you some other gospel, know that they are not from heaven, but from the other place.” In the strongest possible language Paul says, “Let that person or spirit be anathema – eternally condemned.”

People were going around in the early church adding laws to the gospel. Yes, you have to believe in Jesus to be saved but you also have to be circumcised and eat kosher and follow the laws and traditions of the Jews. They were called Judaizers and Paul outright condemned them for changing the gospel and preaching a false, distorted message that added rules and self-reliance to the free grace of the Lord Jesus.

***The Holy Spirit’s job is to RESTATE, to clarify***, to help us understand what Jesus said and did. Remember chapter 14.

**The Names and Activities of the Holy Spirit:**

1. The Spirit of **Truth** to teach us all things
   * To understand the **Gospel** and God’s purposes

“He will teach you all things and bring to your remembrance all that I have said to you.” John 14:26

This is HOW the Holy Spirit teaches us ALL THINGS – by reminding us of the written teachings of Jesus. Everything we need is already recorded in this book. We don’t need new revelation, we need new APPLICATION and deeper understanding of what is already here.

***There’s a word for new revelation***, new theology, a new gospel…

Heresy.

It comes along in every generation, old lies in new forms. Often it uses the devil’s original question, ***“Did God really say…”*** to undermine the authority of God’s word or at least the clarity of it. That’s certainly what the enlightenment did for western society. We don’t need ancient authority and old books like the Bible to guide us – we have reason and science and our brilliant minds. Have you seen Hamilton? It’s a 200 year old celebration of one of our founding fathers for his “top notch… brain.”

But the musical shows that ***Hamilton was a dirtbag***, like Jefferson and Franklin too. Great political minds to whom we owe deep gratitude. But terribly immoral people who embraced and taught enlightenment ideas that overtly rejected and mocked the Bible and traditional values and morality. If you want heroes, **celebrate Washington and Adams**. There were genuinely godly men among our founders who refused to be swept along with the immoral, human-exalting currents of “modern times.” They held fast to the Bible and in turn, the Holy Spirit held on to them.

Look at this teaching in 1 Corinthians.

1. The Spirit of **Truth** to teach us all things
   * To understand the **Gospel** and God’s purposes

“The natural person does not accept the things of the Spirit of God, for they are folly to him, and he is not able to understand them because they are spiritually discerned. The spiritual person judges all things, but is himself to be judged by no one.‘For who has understood the mind of the Lord so as to instruct him?’ But we have the mind of Christ.” 1 Corinthians 2:14-16

Apart from the Holy Spirit, ***non-believers CANNOT understand the truth*** and purposes of God. Only the Spirit of God, through the process of REGENERATION, can open the eyes of the blind and bring conviction of sin to a cold, dead heart. This is why it is so vital that we PRAY for our non-believing friends and family. ***It is only through a direct miracle of God’s grace that anyone turns to Jesus in faith.***

But look at that last line: ***“But we have the mind of Christ.”*** As those indwelt by the Holy Spirit, seeking to walk with Him and to keep in step with Him – we have inside of us, the very mind of the Lord Jesus Christ.

This is what Paul says in Philippians 2 as well. ***The attitude of Jesus should be in us and guiding how we live.*** Not the self-exalting attitude of the devil, but the self-humbling mind of Christ who set aside His glory and made himself nothing, taking the nature of a servant.

**The Names and Activities of the Holy Spirit:**

1. The Spirit of **Truth** to teach us all things
   * To share **God’s Word** with others

“But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you, and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the end of the earth.” Acts 1:8

Jesus told his disciples numerous times ***not to worry what to say*** when they were dragged before kings and courts and questioned about their allegiance to Him. He said, “The Holy Spirit will give you words in that moment that the wisest on earth will not be able to refute.” Don’t worry about what you will say. Trust the Spirit to not only help you understand God’s truth and purposes, but to share with others, when the time is right.

This doesn’t mean we shouldn’t prepare. ***It’s always helpful to prepare.*** Peter tells us to “always be ready to give a reason for the hope that you have.” It means don’t WORRY about what you will say. Don’t stress about it. Pray for opportunities. Pray that the Spirit will go ahead of you to prepare the hearts of your friends, neighbors, co-workers and family members. Pray for boldness to bring up spiritual things.

And trust the Spirit in the moment to give you the words and to give your friend the good heart soil to receive those words.

*Oh Lord Jesus thank you that we don’t need to worry about what to say or how to say it, you’ve given us your Holy Spirit to help us understand and express your good news and your purposes for this world. Please go before us, Holy Spirit, to prepare the hearts and minds of our loved ones who don’t yet know the Lord. Open their eyes to see their sin and to know their need and open their hearts to see the glory of the Lord Jesus and their desperate need for His grace. Thank you, Lord that you teach us all things and Holy Spirit, that you guide us into all truth! We love you and we love your Word! In Jesus’ name, amen.*

**The Names and Activities of the Holy Spirit:**

1. The Spirit of **Grace** to give us all we need
   * Every spiritual blessing **In Christ**

“He will declare to you the things that are to come. He will glorify me, for he will take what is mine and declare it to you.” John 16:13-14

Jesus has given us the Spirit of Comfort, the Spirit of Truth and the Spirit of Grace – the overflowing ***fountain of all generosity*** who creates in our hearts a well of living water that never stops flowing. Ephesians 1 says that at the moment of salvation the believer has “every spiritual blessing in Christ.” All of His love, forgiveness, grace, power, peace – the fullness of His Holy Spirit all at once. It’s a complete package. The Holy Spirit does not come in installments.

Notice what the Spirit does – He takes from what belongs to the Lord Jesus (which is EVERYTHING btw) and declares it to us. He helps us see and understand all that Jesus continues to do in us and around us.

1. The Spirit of **Grace** to give us all we need
   * Every spiritual blessing **In Christ**

“All that the Father has is mine; therefore I said that he will take what is mine and declare it to you.” John 16:15

God is the Giver of every good and perfect gift. ***Jesus taught us to ASK.*** To pray with boldness and shameless audacity, knowing that our Father in heaven sees and knows exactly what we need. He has all things and has promised to give us everything we need. In Matthew, Jesus says ask and the Father will give “good gifts.” Notice how Jesus alters it just a little in Luke:

1. The Spirit of **Grace** to give us all we need
   * Every spiritual blessing **In Christ**

“If you then, who are evil, know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more will the heavenly Father give the Holy Spirit to those who ask him!” Luke 11:13

The greatest gift of all – **and what we primarily need – is the Holy Spirit HIMSELF**. And when we ask our Father in heaven for anything, He joyfully gives us more of what we most need, more awareness of the glory and power and goodness of the Holy Spirit in us. Look back to John 14 one more time.

1. The Spirit of **Grace** to give us all we need
   * As we learn to pray according to **His will**

“Whoever believes in me will also do the works that I do; and greater works than these will he do, because I am going to the Father. Whatever you ask in my name, this I will do, that the Father may be glorified in the Son. If you ask me anything in my name, I will do it.” John 14:12-14

God never promised us our daily burritos or daily chimichangas or daily churros. **He promised us daily BREAD**. He knows what we NEED. Of course, He also knows what we WANT, but never promised to give us everything we want. God is the perfect Father – and every parent knows you can’t give your children everything they want for so many reasons.

Yet Jesus still told his disciples to ASK – and to pray in faith knowing that God hears us and that Jesus Himself will intercede for us. ***But we have to learn to pray according to His will*** – in the Name of Jesus, in line with the purposes of Jesus, for the glory of Jesus, saying “not my will but yours be done.” Those are the prayers that get answered. Once we get ourselves out of the way.

That is when we find the Holy Spirit to be the great Spirit of Grace and generosity – when we learn how to pray for GOD’s will to be done, not our own.

Think of a married couple that is having trouble right now.

**The Names and Activities of the Holy Spirit:**

1. The Spirit of **Comfort** to be with us and help us
2. The Spirit of **Truth** to teach us all things
3. The Spirit of **Grace** to give us all we need

The first thing both husband and wife need is ***the Spirit of Comfort*** – to know that the Lord Jesus is with them and His own Spirit is there to help them. That is where hope and encouragement begin. Any couple in conflict is discouraged and feels there is not hope; things can’t change. But where the Spirit of the Lord is there is peace and comfort and hope and power to change.

Then the couple **needs the Spirit of Truth**. They each need to be reminded of the gospel they once believed. The husband needs to focus on his own sin and need of a Savior. The wife needs to focus on her own sin and her need of a Savior. When both stand before God like the tax collector beating his breast and saying, “Lord have mercy on me, a sinner,” the table is set for healing in the marriage. As long as they both stand back from the other, looking down in judgment like the Pharisee and saying, “Lord, thank you that I’m not like this wicked publican I was fool enough to marry.” As long as their hearts are proud and stubborn reconciliation will remain far away.

But as the Holy Spirit guides them into all truth they will increasingly understand the grace each of them need from the Lord and they will have greater sympathy for the other sinner in the marriage. They will also ***perceive God’s purposes*** for marriage are to shape them more into the image of Christ; to shave off their selfishness and pride and make them more dependent on the Lord. And the Holy Spirit will give them words to lovingly and respectfully address one another to work through whatever issues brought them to this point.

Then they will **know the Spirit of Grace**, as the One who gives them all they need – even if, right now, their husband or wife is giving them NOTHING in return. Still, in the Lord, they have every spiritual blessing and can live in the fullness of love, joy, peace, patience and all the other fruit of the Spirit.

They will start to pray and ***ask for the right things*** – that God would BLESS their enemy; I mean their spouse. That God would give them love and respect and delight in each other again. That they would have sympathy and compassion for each other rather than anger and frustration.

*Lord Jesus thank you for sending your Holy Spirit to comfort us with your own presence. Thank you for giving us your Spirit to guide us into all truth, helping us understand all you have done for us and all you are doing around us. Thank you for giving us every good and perfect gift through your Holy Spirit who connects us with your very life and love – all the fullness of God. Help us to BE FILLED with all that you are, to remember and rejoice in your great love for us and to share that love with those around us – especially those most difficult for us to love right now. We praise you, our holy God – Father, Son and Holy Spirit! In Jesus’ Name, amen.*