

The Counselor

Lesson 14

John 14:15-31

Opener

Ask: When you are separated from someone you love, how do you feel? (lonely, afraid, sad, miss them, etc.)

Jesus' disciples were about to experience his death. They had walked with him every day for three years, and now they would be separated from him. However, Jesus promised them that he would not leave them alone—he would send the Holy Spirit.

Ask: Is it comforting for you to know that Jesus leaves his Spirit with his followers?

Eugene Patterson, in his book *Praying with Jesus*, says,

When someone leaves us, we are poorer for their absence; when Jesus left his disciples, they were suddenly richer. They had, instead of the physical form of Jesus *with* them, the Holy Spirit *in* them.

Scripture

“And I will ask the Father, and he will give you another Counselor, who will never leave you. He is the Holy Spirit, who leads into all truth. . . . But when the Father sends the Counselor as my representative—and by the Counselor I mean the Holy Spirit—he will teach you everything and will remind you of everything I myself have told you.”
- John 14:16-17a, 26

Discussion

vv. 15-26

God had everything planned out from the beginning. He sent his son to earth to save people and to allow them to have a relationship with Him. But after his son left the earth, He didn't leave the people alone. He left His Spirit with all those who would believe in him. It is this Spirit, the Holy Spirit, that guides us and directs us. This is the Holy Spirit Jesus is telling his disciples about.

In verse 16, Jesus refers to the Holy Spirit as the Counselor.

Ask: What words come to mind when you think of a counselor? (guide, comforter, strengthener).

Other translations of this verse use the word “helper, comforter, strengthener.” We think of a counselor as a trusted friend who listens to us and gives us good advice. Whenever we depend on the Holy Spirit as our guide, His advice is always perfect! Not only that, but Jesus says that the Spirit “leads into all truth.” In other words, as we listen to the Spirit’s guidance more and more, we get closer to God—and we gain wisdom.

In verse 18, Jesus reminds us that he did not plan on leaving his friends and followers with nothing—he would leave them with the gift of his eternal presence in their hearts (the Holy Spirit).

Jesus refers to the Holy Spirit as his representative in verse 26. He again uses the word Counselor to describe the Holy Spirit, and then says that the Spirit will “teach you everything and remind you of everything I myself have told you.” So the Spirit not only leads us, but teaches us EVERYTHING!!! We should be growing in our knowledge of God every day if we are allowing the Spirit to teach us.

Ask: How do we let the Holy Spirit teach us and lead us?

Jesus begins the lesson about the Holy Spirit by stating, “If you love me, obey my commandments” (v. 15). And again he states in verse 21, “Those who obey my commandments are the ones who love me. . . . And I will reveal myself to each one of them.” And in verse 23, “All those who love me will do what I say. My Father will love them, and we will come to them and live with them.”

Jesus makes it very clear that to be led by the Spirit, we must obey Him. Whenever we walk in obedience to Christ, he can have free reign in our hearts. It is then that he teaches us and reveals things about himself to us.

God gives us this same promise in Psalm 25:12,14 when he says

Who are those who fear the Lord? He will show *them* the path they should choose. . . . Friendship with the Lord is reserved for those who fear him.

With them he shares the secrets of his covenant.

(Italics added)

God wants us to honor him and do what he tells us. He then blesses us by showing himself to us.

vv. 27-31

Jesus reminds his disciples once again that he is not leaving them empty-handed. He is giving them the gift of the Holy Spirit, which *gives* them “peace of mind and heart” (v. 27). He compares the world in general to his disciples in vv. 17 and 27. He states that the world cannot know him, nor can it receive the peace that his followers have.

The peace of Christ can only be experienced by those who know him personally. Those who place their hope and trust in him know that this world and all its desires are passing away, but the man who does the will of God will live forever (1 John 2:17). The rest of the world cannot know that kind of peace.

Application

Ask: Have you experienced the peace of mind and heart that Jesus gives?

Are you growing in your walk with Christ?

Are you allowing the Holy Spirit to guide you in your daily life?

These are very important questions. A person can believe in God but not have a personal relationship with Jesus Christ. When a person gives Christ his/her life, it is at this point that they receive the Holy Spirit.

“For God so loved the world, that he gave his one and only Son, that whoever believes in him will not perish, but have eternal life.”
- John 3:16

