

John 14:15-31 // Jesus Promises the Holy Spirit

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[0 : 00] Which is found on the Church Bible, page 108.!

The world cannot accept Him, because it neither sees Him nor knows Him. But you know Him, for He lives with you and will be in you.

I will not leave you as orphans. I will come to you. Before long, the world will not see me anymore, but you will see me.

Because I live, you also will live. On that day, you will realize that I am in my Father, and you are in me, and I am in you.

Whoever has my commands and keeps them is the one who loves me. The one who loves me will be loved by my Father, and I too will love them and show myself to them.

[1 : 26] Then Judas, not Judas Iscariot, said, But Lord, why do you intend to show yourself to us and not to the world?

Jesus replied, Anyone who loves me will obey my teaching. My Father will love them, and we will come to them and make our home with them.

Anyone who does not love me will not obey my teaching. These words you hear are not my own. They belong to the Father who sent me. All this I have spoken while still with you.

But the Advocate, the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in my name, will teach you all things and remind you of everything I have said to you.

Peace I leave with you. My peace I give you. I do not give to you as the world gives.

[2 : 29] Do not let your hearts be troubled, and do not be afraid. You heard me say, I am going away, and I am coming back to you.

If you loved me, you will be glad that I am going to the Father, for the Father is greater than I. I have told you now before it happens, so that when it does happen, you will believe.

I will not say much more to you, for the Prince of this world is coming. He has no hold over me, but he comes so that the world may learn that I love the Father, and do exactly what my Father has commanded me.

Come now, let us lead. Thanks very much, Joanne. Hi, everyone. I'm Robbie. It's always a joy to get to share God's word with one another, and tonight we are digging in.

We're just doing a one-off sermon. Normally, it's in Silas. We work through books of the Bible, section by section, but the way things have worked out, we have a one-off, and so we're jumping into John chapter 14. Now, John 14 is...

[3 : 40] We're jumping in the middle of quite an important moment in the gospel. Sorry, let me get myself sorted before I could keep talking. We're jumping into a really important event in the gospel, and it's this moment that actually, when you think about it from the disciples' point of view, it must have been very disorientating.

You see, chapters 13 to 17 of John are often called a section, and it's often called the upper room discourse, happening after the Last Supper, and basically what happens is, in chapter 13, Jesus tells his disciples that he's about to leave them.

Having been with them for three years constantly, these men have got to figure out how to live without Jesus. It's a bit of a sour note to end a lovely Passover meal.

These 11 men, they're going to be left without Jesus' power and his wisdom, without the healings, without his teaching. They're left to face a future that they hadn't planned for and they weren't ready for.

A future without their rabbi, their teacher, their Messiah. Now, that would have been a shock for those disciples, but actually, in some ways, for us today, that is our constant life.

[4 : 58] We have never had the physical presence of Jesus with us. We've never seen him with our own eyes. Instead, we get to rely on his word by faith and praise God that we have it, but sometimes it would just seem so much easier if Jesus was with us, if we could just see him once.

It's really easy to feel very alone in that, especially many of us spend most of our weeks as the only believer in a workplace or a class in our schools or some of us are the only believer in our family.

We've got to live for Jesus in a world that tells us it's stupid to live for Jesus because we have not seen him before. Was he real? How can we know for sure if this is the right life for us?

Now, this is the kind of things that I think those disciples will have been facing when Jesus said to them, I'm going away from you. Distress must have been bubbling up inside them.

Thankfully, Jesus doesn't just say to these disciples that he's leaving. He doesn't just say, right, I'm off, ta-ta, and then boost. No. In Jesus' kindness and mercy, he spends the rest of their time in that upper room preparing them for life without him.

[6 : 24] And that is what the whole of John 14 to 17 is all about. It is Jesus' gifts to a group of men who are about to go and transform the world in his name, even though it's going to be hard.

And it is his gift for us today, for those who struggle without his presence, who seek to press on believing in his word, even when it is very hard and we feel so alone.

If you are struggling tonight, Christian, then let me encourage you to go home and read the whole of this section. Just those four chapters, 14 to 17, I promise you they will bring you comfort.

I mean, just look with me. Just 14 verse 1. This is how Jesus starts. Do not let your hearts be troubled. This whole section is to ease our anxiety, to stop our spiraling thoughts overwhelming us, to stop the doubts drowning us in life.

Jesus has taught these chapters, this whole sense of teaching, to ease our hearts. So tonight, as we dig into just the second half of one of the four chapters, I'm going to draw out three things.

[7 : 38] I had a big lunch today. I'm very full and very tired, so I will be going as quick as I can. Drawing out some wonderful truths, right? Here's the three points up front so you can follow where we are.

First, we're going to see that the Father gives the helper, so keep Christ's commands. Secondly, we'll see that the Spirit gives them remembrance, so don't be troubled.

And third, we're going to see that the Son goes away, but rejoice in that. So let me pray before we dig in. Father God, we come tonight asking for your kindness to us.

Reveal your words to our hearts. Transform our minds. Give us confidence in what you've done that we might live in the world we now inhabit.

Speak to us by your Spirit and ease our troubled hearts. Amen. So, first things first. The Father gives them the helper, so keep Christ's commands.

[8 : 43] Aloneness is a very real thing we will all have to face as a Christian. We will all feel alone at some points. But we read in tonight's passage that the Father has sent us a helper to comfort us.

Look with me at verse 16. This is Jesus saying, I will ask the Father and He will give you another advocate to help you and be with you forever. The Spirit of truth.

You know Him for He lives with you and will be in you. Jesus is going to ask His Father to send an advocate to His followers. The advocate is the Holy Spirit.

His disciples will be gifted God's presence. presence. And the Spirit will not only be with them, but He will be in them.

The Holy Spirit of truth will dwell within the people of God. So, even as Jesus departs from His disciples, He's promising them that the Father will send His Spirit and they will never be alone again.

[9 : 52] wherever a follower of Jesus finds themselves, whatever they do, the Spirit lives in their hearts forever.

So, brother and sister, you are never alone. Wherever you lay your head down tonight, whether surrounded by a family who doesn't know Jesus or those who do, whether you're going to a workplace tomorrow where you know everyone there thinks you are an idiot for coming to church, when you spend time with your sports team or friends who think you are just out of your mind to believe the things you do because an old book tells you so, in those times, you have not been left out to dry.

You are not alone. You're not isolated. You've not been cut off from the people or presence of God when those things get hard. instead, you have a helper. You have the spirit of God living inside you to help you, to encourage you, to bring comfort in the times of pain and joy in those times of plenty.

God really dwells within us. He is not distant and He has not left you. I wonder if over summer, did anybody watch much Wimbledon?

Well, I think often we can feel a bit like a tennis player in the Christian life. Bear with me. In Wimbledon, when you watch it on TV, you see in the big tense matches, like just before a serve, and you get that shot of them like kind of from the net, and you see them up.

[11 : 34] They're always looking up to the same spot in the stands. And these players, they're not looking to their family, they're not looking to their friends, or they're not just taking in the crowds. They're looking in the coach's box because that is where their coach is.

They are looking there for encouragement, for advice, for someone to calm them when the stress gets too high. They know that that coach will always be in the same place, but they're not with them in the heat of the moment.

They are sitting on the sidelines in the stands. Sometimes it can feel like God is that coach. He is always there. You can always look up to him, but he is sitting in heaven at a distance from us.

And when the heat of this world gets too much, well, he's far away. If that is a feeling you relate to, well, hear what Jesus says here.

The Holy Spirit is dwelling inside us. Our coach is not far distant on the sidelines. He is with us in those very, very hardest of moments.

[12 : 42] He goes through everything we go through. We are never alone because our coach is with us always. The Father has sent us this helper so we can confidently live for Christ, leaning on him for the transforming work of the Spirit.

looking inwardly and praying for his help in those moments of aloneness to stand firm for the truth. What comfort that truly is.

But that comfort isn't for everyone. Look at the rest of verse 17 with me, please. The world cannot accept him because it neither sees him nor knows him.

So simply, there are two groups of people, right? There are those who receive Jesus and know Jesus and so are gifted the Spirit and there are those who don't know Jesus and so they cannot receive the Spirit.

A great question that so many of us ask so often when life gets hard is, well, how do I know which group I'm in? What sign do I have that I really have received the Spirit? Some people tell us that we need to have a really impressive felt moment where the Spirit descends upon us.

[14 : 00] Others say you have to have a special baptism to receive the Spirit. Well, notice that Jesus says neither of those things. The way we know who has the Spirit is, look with me to verse 21, whoever has my commands and keeps them is the one who loves me and the one who loves me will be loved by my Father and I too will love them and show myself to them.

And again, down to verse 23, anyone who loves me will obey my teaching. My Father loves them and we will come to them and make our home with them. Anyone who does not love me will not obey my teaching.

How can we be certain that the Spirit of God dwells within us? Well, by keeping Jesus' commands. That sounds a little bit foreign when we put it that way.

If you're maybe a bit fluent in the Gospel, that has a strange accent, doesn't it? It sounds like we need to do something to receive the Father's love.

We have to follow these commands to receive this presence. If you're like me when you first read that and you heard it that way, then I imagine your shoulders have probably just slumped.

[15 : 14] the burden of that weight will make you drag your feet this week. Because it sounds like we have to make sure we're doing enough to be loved by God.

That isn't what Jesus is saying. The problem with that reading of these verses is basically that we've inserted our own definitions onto what Jesus has said.

because we're assuming that when he talks of these commands that he means some moral performative act. You know, do this, don't do this. But when we read John's Gospel, we need to make sure that we're letting John define the phrases.

So when Jesus mentions his commands here, well, what does he mean? What have the commands been in John? Well, in all of John, there are maybe two outright moral commands.

In John 13, we hear Jesus teach that we need to love one another as Jesus has loved us. And in John 21, we hear that Peter is given an explicit command to feed his sheep.

[16 : 25] Right? Those are two explicit moral commands, two things that need to be done. But if you work from the beginning of John's Gospel, and you took a highlighter pen, and you highlighted every imperative, every command Jesus gives, the majority are going to look like this.

They're going to come on the screen behind me. There we go, right. If it just says pro-presenter, it's okay, look behind it. This is what the commands Jesus gives in his Gospel of John.

Receive me, follow me, believe in the light, believe in God, believe me, abide in me, abide in my love, receive the Holy Spirit.

Jesus' commands in John are not about do this, don't do that. Jesus' commandments in John are about responding to who he is. Receive him, follow him, believe in him, abide in him.

If we want to be confident that we have received the love of the Father and the Son through the presence of his Spirit, hear his words and believe, believe, believe, believe, abide, follow him.

[17 : 38] To try and do enough to earn this is like running on a giant hamster wheel and there is no end to it. Jesus isn't setting us up to fail by saying that we have to keep his commands if we love him.

Instead, he is freeing us from the burden of any behavior or standards. You don't have to be good enough. You don't have to be productive enough or love enough.

All you need is to believe in Jesus. No matter where you are, how you feel, who surrounds you, if you trust and believe in Jesus, you are guaranteed the joyful gift of the Spirit dwelling within you.

the incredible truth that the Father and Son love you as they love each other for eternity and have made their home with you. Receive Jesus and you receive their presence forever.

Praise God. Let me move on to point two. Alan, we can get that off the screen now to save it being flickering. Point two, the Spirit brings remembrance so don't be troubled.

[18 : 52] This is a shorter point, I promise. And what does the Spirit do for the disciples when he arrives? Well, the big thing is the Spirit brings to mind all the truths they'll ever need.

Look with me to verse 25 of our chapter. All this I have spoken while still with you, but the Advocate, the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in my name will teach you all things and will remind you of everything I have said to you.

These disciples were young men. They were experiencing things in those three years with Jesus that no one had ever seen before. It must have been an overwhelming time to be one of these twelve men.

You know, impossible to forget the incredible things you see, but equally, it must have been hard to remember because of the sheer amount of miracles and teachings and speeches Jesus made.

But for us today in 2025, this verse actually gives us great confidence that the Gospels really are what happens. You see, these disciples didn't forget anything because the Holy Spirit reminded them of everything Jesus said to them.

[20 : 08] It taught them all things. They couldn't forget anything. Writing the Gospels was not a creative writing exercise where they wanted to add a little bit of sparkle to the life story of Jesus.

The Spirit specifically reminded them all they needed to be able to go out and preach and teach God's words. It was not new revelation, but a reminder of what they had seen and heard.

Even as John sat down decades later to put pen to paper on his Gospel, the Spirit was bringing to mind all that Jesus said. And to quote John 21, there was so much that he remembered words that John supposes if even the whole world would not have room for the books that would be written about what Jesus did.

Jesus is leaving them, but he's not left them without the things they need to know. He has taught them what they need when he was with them, and when he leaves them, the Spirit will bring to their remembrance everything when they just need it the most.

This is not just what the disciples needed, but the Spirit worked back then for those men to give them everything that we need too. Jesus never does half a job.

[21 : 26] He never gives us some of what we need. Instead, he ensured that his word would be written down that we might believe in him because the Spirit reminded those disciples then, we today can be certain that this word, this Bible, these scriptures are his actual words.

So that means today, this week, this month, when you stand up for the biblical truths about unpopular opinions, same-sex marriage, gender, sexuality, end-of-life issues as we'll think about this week, or whether it's just talking about how you spend your money or who you spend your time with, how you speak about women or men with your friends, when you live differently because of what you've learned in God's words, you don't have to worry, is this actually it?

Is this really true? Is this the right way that God wants me to live? Because it's been written by men inspired by the Spirit who remembered everything that Jesus said.

The world may shout loudly that we are wrong, but their volume does not erase truth or the goodness of these divinely inspired scriptures.

Don't let the volume confuse you. Don't let their absolute certainty bring doubt to our absolute truth in the person and words of Jesus. Because when we believe what his word says, we are standing on the firmest foundations, the words of the God who created all things and wanted his people to return to him, so he wrote it down for us even 2,000 years later.

[23 : 11] The Spirit brought remembrance that we might have his words, so do not be troubled when others tell us that we're wrong. It really is true. Let's look at the third and final point.

The Son is going away, but rejoice in that. In verse 28, Jesus starts to talk once more about him leaving. It seems that even after the great gifts that the disciples have been promised, that his coming departure is still saddening them.

So much so that Jesus takes a moment to reiterate why he is going and to tell them that they should be rejoicing. Look at verse 28 with me. Let me read it again.

You heard me say, I am going away and I'm coming back to you. If you loved me, you would be glad that I'm going to the Father, for the Father is greater than I. I have told you now before it happens so that when it does happen, you will believe.

I will not say much more to you, for the Prince of this world is coming. He has no hold over me, but he comes so that the world may learn that I love the Father and do exactly what the Father has commanded me.

[24 : 28] Jesus tells them quite plainly, if you understood what I was saying, you would rejoice in what's about to happen. We might ask the question, what are they to rejoice in?

This whole, these last few verses, they have just such an ominous tone about them. I will not say much more to you, for the Prince of this world is coming. Whoa, that sounds intense.

Who is this Prince? What's about to happen? The disciples must have been so concerned and confused. Thankfully, we sit on the opposite side of the story.

We can look back with a full set of facts and understand Jesus in a way they couldn't at that moment of Jesus' teachings, right? The Prince of this world, well, it's the devil himself.

He rules this world temporarily and he rules all those who hate the light of Jesus. And in this moment, the devil is creeping towards Jesus.

[25 : 32] He's prowling and sneaking and moving in the shadows in an attempt to end the Son of God forever. This great enemy of good is doing all he can to get Jesus on the cross.

But the reality is the Prince of this world did not make Jesus die. You see, this Prince has no power over the King of all creation.

Verse 30, this Prince has no claim on me, no hold over me. We see that in Jesus' death on the cross, it is not the devil's trickery that has won.

Instead, it is the immense, obedient love of Christ. Look at verse 31 again. The Prince comes so that the world may learn that I love the Father and do exactly what my Father has commanded me.

Jesus obeys his Father and gave up his life because he loved us so much he wanted to save us from this foul creature of lies. The Prince of this world has no hold on Jesus and that means he has no hold on any believer either.

[26 : 58] Look back to verse 19 with me. Because I live, you also will live. Because Jesus died and rose again, we also will rise again.

All of this happens because Jesus left the disciples on that night. If Jesus had not left the disciples, he would not have gone on to defeat death. And no one could have been reconciled to the Father, this momentary sadness the disciples face actually is life changing, world altering good news.

Because it is in his death that Jesus leads us to life. The life he has offered since John chapter three. So if you're here tonight and you aren't yet a follower of Jesus, I just want you to take a moment to reflect on the great love this son of God has for you.

See the power that he has. The prince of this world, the ruler of death and all that is evil, has no hold on him. God's power is such that even death cannot touch Jesus.

There is a God who so loves you, he wants you to be with him forever. He wants to ensure that you will never be alone again. There's a God who loves you so much that he has fought evil and he has won that you might get to look at that great enemy of all, that death that awaits us and boldly proclaim you had no hold on Jesus and you have no hold on me.

[28 : 55] Because Jesus lives, I too will live. Look to this man Jesus, see what he has told us of who he is and believe in the power of his death and resurrection.

Look to him as he is lifted up on that cross and believe death will be no more for you. brothers and sisters, those who already follow the Lord Jesus have the exact same advice.

Do not fall for the world's lies. Receive that great gift that the world can never match, no matter how much it promises. Receive the gift of the Spirit.

Believe in the words of Jesus. Look to his magnificent sacrifice and abide in his love. friends, that is all we have to do for the comfort we need to face the world in which we can seem so alone and yet truly never are.

For we have the comfort of his presence, the wisdom of his words, and the power of his resurrection. You are never alone for the Spirit dwells with you.

[30 : 14] So let's go out this week and live boldly, filled afresh with God's grace to stand firm in the world. Rest in the knowledge that Christ Jesus has done everything.

So abide in him, receive him, believe in him. And when the devil comes crawling boldly, we can proclaim to him, you have no hold on Jesus and so you have no hold on me.

His lies are nothing compared to that wonderful truth that Jesus lives and so shall we. Praise God. Let me pray. Father God, you are so good to us.

Not only have you sent your son to die for us, but you've given us these words to comfort us. Lord, I pray that our hearts would not be troubled.

We would be at ease in the knowledge that abiding in you is all we have to do, that your spirit dwells within us. We are never alone. Help us to live joyfully with that news, with no burden on our shoulders, but instead resting and abiding in you.

[31 : 31] We pray these things in Jesus' name. Amen. Stand with us as we sing to respond. Amen.
Amen.

Amen. Thank you.