

# OpenTheo

## John 14:15 - 14:31



### Gospel of John - Steve Gregg

In this study of John 14:15-31, Steve Gregg delves into Jesus' promise to send the Holy Spirit as a Comforter and Advocate for his disciples. Gregg suggests that Jesus is implying that he is already serving as an advocate for his disciples, but the Holy Spirit will take on this role in the next phase of the Kingdom of God. He emphasizes that love for Jesus leads to obedience to his commandments and explains that the Holy Spirit will dwell among believers and bear witness to their spirits. Gregg concludes by discussing Jesus' unshakable peace in the face of difficult circumstances and his ultimate sacrifice for mankind.

### Transcript

Let's look again at John 14. John 14. This wasn't something they were anticipating, that he would go away.

And so, by way of consolation to them, he says, Well, I'm not really going away entirely. I'm going to come back. So his first promise he made to them is that he will come again.

So it's not like he's going away forever. And he made that promise in verse 3. If I go to prepare a place for you, I will come again and receive you to myself. Now the second promise he makes them is that they will be able to do the works that he has done.

He will actually continue to work through them. And they will do even greater works than what he has done. So if they've been impressed with his works and they think, well, how is the world going to get along without you? His answer is, well, they'll have you.

His answer is, you will be doing the works I've been doing because I'm going to my father. You will now take over my work and you'll do it much more broadly than I have. I mean, you'll have more converts than Jesus had.

And certainly that would be how it turned out to be so. They did reach more people, preach more widely, gather permanently more persons into the sheepfold than Jesus himself did in his lifetime. And the third promise is that while he is gone, they will have his name, that is his authority, his access key to God.

That they can come to the Father and they can ask anything in Jesus' name. And of course, anything in Jesus' name means anything he would ask. It doesn't mean that you've got some kind of a carte blanche to ask anything that you might wish for and then tag on the name of Jesus as sort of a pressure placed upon God to give you the selfish thing you asked for.

Well, you've got to do it because I'm saying it in Jesus' name. When you actually pray in Jesus' name, you're actually praying what Jesus himself would pray and would authorize you to pray on his behalf. So, we have these promises.

He'll be back. In the meantime, they will be continuing his work and they will have access to God through his name. And of course, we come now to the key message of this Upper Room Discourse in verse 15 and following, where he says, If you love me, keep my commandments, and I will pray the Father, and he will give you another helper, that he may abide with you forever.

Even the spirit of truth, whom the world cannot receive because it neither sees him nor knows him, but you know him, for he dwells with you and will be in you. I will not leave you orphans, I will come to you a little while longer, and the world will see me no more, but you will see me, because I live, you will live also. At that time you will know that I am in my Father, and you in me, and I in you.

He who has my commandments and keeps them, it is he who loves me, and he who loves me will be loved by my Father, and I will love him and manifest myself to him. Judas, not Judas Iscariot, the other Judas, said to him, Lord, how is it that you will manifest yourself to us and not to the world? And Jesus answered and said to him, If anyone loves me, he will keep my word, and my Father will love him, and we will come to him and make our home with him. He who does not love me does not keep my words, and the words which you hear is not mine, but the Father's who sent me.

These things I have spoken to you while being present with you. But the helper, the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in my name, he will teach you all things and bring to your remembrance all things that I said to you. Okay, we'll stop there for the moment and go back over that.

Now Jesus said he's going to send another helper as the new King James renders it. The King James renders it a comforter. The word in the Greek is parakletos.

The English transliteration of that would be the paraclete. And sometimes the word paraclete has entered into the Christian vocabulary just as a transliteration of the Greek. The paraclete.

What is the paraclete? Well, parakletos comes from two Greek particles. One is para, P-A-R-A, para, which means alongside. And kleitos comes from kleo or called.

Parakletos means called alongside. Now, just called alongside wouldn't tell you very much, unless you also know how the usage is in the Greek language, what parakletos means. Parakletos means an advocate, a person who is called to stand alongside a defendant, to assist and to defend and to be a friend in court, a defense attorney.

That's how the Greek language used the word parakletos, a friend in court. And an advocate. And in fact, the same word is translated as advocate in the King James Version.

In 1 John 2, verse 1, the new King James also uses the word advocate to translate the same word. 1 John 2, verse 1 says, My little children, these things I write to you, that you may not sin. And if anyone sins, we have a parakletos.

Translated an advocate with the Father. Jesus Christ, the righteous. Now notice, in this place, Jesus is called a parakletos, a paraklete.

A defense attorney. If you sin, you have a defender before God. You have one who stands for you before God.

One who is called alongside you to represent your interests before God. And so, if we sin, we have a defense attorney before God. And that is Jesus, the righteous.

Now it is interesting that John, who wrote both the Gospel of John and this epistle, would use the word parakletos to speak of Jesus here. Since the word was used in the Gospel of John only of the Holy Spirit. But you see, I think John is understanding when Jesus said, I will send you another paraklete, that he is implying that they have had a paraklete with them already.

And that is Jesus himself. They have had Jesus with them as a paraklete. He is going away, he is going to send another parakletos.

And the word another, there are two Greek words for another. One specifically means another of a different sort. And another word means another of the same sort.

And John, in translating Jesus' words, which probably were originally in Aramaic, in Greek, he uses the word in Greek that means another of the same sort. So Jesus says in verse 16 of John 14, I will pray the Father, he will send you another paraklete of the same sort as myself. Jesus is our paraklete and the Holy Spirit is another of the same sort.

A paraklete. Now, with that in view, we find the word paraklete is used in John 14, 16, and again in verse 26, where it says the paraklete, the helper, it is translated here. The Holy Spirit.

Now notice in verse 17, the Holy Spirit is called the Spirit of Truth. The paraklete, in

verses 16 and 17, is called the Spirit of Truth. In verse 26, he is simply called the Holy Spirit.

So Spirit of Truth and Holy Spirit are the same spirit. And that is the paraklete that Jesus said he is sending. Now, the sending of the Holy Spirit is actually the basis for the promises he has made to them in the earlier verses.

The coming of the Holy Spirit to the church was the next phase of the kingdom of God. The king landed in Jesus and he proclaimed his kingdom. He gathered his initial warriors and subjects, and he commissioned them to go out and expand his kingdom to others.

But then he went away. But then he came back. He came back in the person of his Holy Spirit.

Now when he says in verse 18, I will not leave you orphans, I will come to you, he means in the parakletos. He is not referring to his second coming here. You know, there are a number of references in the Upper Room Discourse to Jesus saying he will come again to them.

Now, it is ambiguous in verse 3 when he says I will come again and receive you unto myself, where I am you may be also, because this could be a reference to the second coming, which we do anticipate. However, in view of the fact that he continually through the discourse talks about him coming in the person of the Holy Spirit, it might be that he is even anticipating that thought in verse 3. That I am going away, but I won't be gone long, because I will come again in the person of the Holy Spirit. Then you will be with me all the time, because I will be with you all the time.

I will dwell in you, as he is saying here in verse 17. He says, you know him, for he dwells with you and will be in you. So, this Holy Spirit, who is the Spirit of Christ, will dwell in us, thus Christ will be continually with us.

Where he is, there we will also be. Now, how do I know that verse 18 is talking about the coming of the Holy Spirit? Because he says, concerning the Holy Spirit, he says, the world doesn't know him, but you know him. And then in verse 19 he says, a little while longer, and the world will not see me anymore, but you will see me.

He is drawing a contrast here to the world's knowledge of him, and experience of him, and the disciples' knowledge and experience of him. They don't know the Holy Spirit, but the disciples do. They won't see Jesus, but the disciples will see him.

And he is even asked about that by Judas, not Iscariot, in verse 22. Lord, how is it that you will manifest yourself to us and not to the world? How will we see you and the world won't see you? And he answers him, well, it's this way, in verse 23. If anyone loves me, he will keep my word.

My Father will love him and we will come to him and make our home with him. This is not talking about the second coming. This is not talking even about Jesus coming back from the grave after three days.

This is talking about God's indwelling, making his home in the believer, the Father and the Son together in the persons of the Holy Spirit, and Jesus and the Father will come and make their home with the believer, as he does. When we become believers, his spirit comes to dwell in us. So all of this, although he is using the language of his return, is not necessarily talking about his physical return, but rather his coming back to them in a form that will be just as gratifying and more productive.

Rather than him being the one Son of God, and them being his clueless followers, blundering around trying to keep up with him and trying to understand what he is saying, but most of the time failing, they will now have him inside them. And the Holy Spirit will teach them everything. The Holy Spirit will enable them to do everything.

The works that Jesus did, the Holy Spirit will work those works through them. They will become the body of Christ. And because they share the spirit of Christ.

So this coming of the Holy Spirit is the form in which Jesus is telling them he is going to return to them. Now that we anticipate his second coming is true also. And the Bible does have much to say about that.

But this may not be the subject of this discourse. That is, Jesus might not at this point be saying, OK, I am going away, but someday thousands of years from now I am going to come back. Visibly in the clouds and all that.

Though he would indeed do that someday, that would hardly be an immediate consolation to them. That someday a long, long, long, long, long, long time from now, long after you are dead, I will come back again. Well, so what? How does that benefit us? But I am going to come right back.

A little while. And you won't see me. Then a little while.

And you will. It is just going to be a little while. I will be gone.

Now, is he talking about the three days that he was in the grave, and then they saw him again after that? Or is he talking about the 50 days? The days between his crucifixion and Pentecost? Because of his emphasis on the Holy Spirit, and his equation of that with him coming to them in verse 18, it seems to me that he is talking about becoming the spirit of Pentecost in all the cases. Or perhaps even before Pentecost, because after Jesus rose from the dead, he breathed on them and said, receive the Holy Spirit. So, in a sense, he gave them the Holy Spirit before he gave it to the rest of the church at Pentecost.

But the point here is, he now is tying together what he said so far about the promises. You are going to have power to do what I do. I am going to return to you.

I will be with you. You will now be able to act in my name, because you will be, as it were, me, my body. Because my spirit will be embodied in you, as the spirit is now embodied in Jesus on earth, when he was here.

So, these are the ideas. It is the coming of the spirit. Now, John has introduced this concept that the Holy Spirit would come earlier in the Gospel of John, back in chapter 7. Of course, even if you go back as far as, say, chapter 3, he told Nicodemus, you have to be born of the spirit.

But, in John 7, verses 37-39, on the last day, the great day of the feast, Jesus stood and cried out, saying, If anyone thirsts, let him come to me and drink. He who believes in me, as the Scripture has said, out of his heart will flow rivers of living water. But this he spoke concerning the spirit, whom those believing in him would receive.

For the Holy Spirit was not yet given, because Jesus was not yet glorified. Well, he was soon to be glorified at the time he was speaking in chapter 14. And so, it was now time for this fulfillment to take place.

Now, in verse 15, he introduces the idea of the coming of the spirit with these words. If you love me, keep my commandments. Now, this keep my commandments here is given in the imperative, like a command.

Keep my commandments. Although, in the Greek, it's not clear whether it's imperative or indicative. It could be either way.

Indicative would be just a statement. You will keep my commandments. Either one makes sense.

If you love me, you'll keep my commandments. That's just a statement. An indicative statement, not an imperative.

It's just fact. A person who loves me will also keep my commandments. If that's what he's saying here, it would agree very much with verse 21 and 23.

Because in verse 21, it says, If it is he who has my commandments and keeps them, it is he who loves me. He doesn't say, If you love me, then you have to do additionally something. I'm commanding you to keep my commandments.

He's saying, you will. The person who has my commandments and keeps them is the one who loves me. Likewise, in verse 23, If anyone loves me, he will keep my word.

So, it sounds like he's not giving a command to keep his commandments. After all, a command to keep his commandments is a bit redundant. But he's saying, If you love me,

then it will be obvious.

Because you will keep my commandments. He says, and I will pray the Father, and he will give you another helper, Paraclete. That he may abide with you forever.

In other words, I'm not going to abide with you forever in this form, but I will, in the person of the Paraclete, abide with you forever. I'll never be away from you again. Even the spirit of truth whom the world cannot receive, because it neither sees him nor knows him, but you know him, for he dwells with you, and will be in you.

Now, he says that those who love him will keep his commandments, and apparently that's serving as a condition for the next statement. And I'll pray the Father, and he'll send you the Holy Spirit. The Holy Spirit is given to those who are obedient to Christ.

Not necessarily as a reward for their obedience, but they are the ones who are obedient. Peter, in Acts chapter 5, Acts 5.32, Peter says, we are his witnesses to these things. And so also is the Holy Spirit whom God has given to those who obey him.

God gives his Holy Spirit to those who obey him. And so Jesus says, if you love me, you'll keep my commandments, and I will ask the Father to send his Holy Spirit to you. Because you're my obedient followers.

There are people, perhaps, who regard themselves as Christians, but never are filled with the Spirit. Maybe never even have the Holy Spirit. Maybe they're not really even Christians, because they are not obedient.

They're not those who love him and obey him. Being a Christian isn't just saying a prayer, or getting baptized, or making a profession of faith. It is a change of heart, where your love is directed toward Christ, and you lovingly, not legalistically, but lovingly, obey him.

You obey him because you want to. When you love him, you'll want to obey him, he said. Now, if that's the conversion experience a person has had, then they will have the Holy Spirit also.

And he says that he may abide with you forever. Now, you is plural. It's talking about the church.

It's talking about the company of believers. The Holy Spirit will abide with the company of believers forever. This is not necessarily a comment related to the subject of personal, eternal security.

I mean, it may have ramifications in that area or not, depending on what the rest of Scripture speaks. But this is not addressing that subject. It's not saying that each of you, and each Christian who receives the Spirit, will always have the Spirit with them forever

and ever, unconditionally.

But rather, the Holy Spirit will be given to the believers, to dwell among the believers, as Christ had dwelt among them. He left, but the Holy Spirit will never leave. The Holy Spirit will never leave the church.

He will be the abiding presence of Christ in the church. He'll dwell or abide with you. And he says, even the Spirit of truth, verse 17, whom the world cannot receive because it neither sees Him nor knows Him.

He says, but you know Him. So he's saying, the world doesn't see or know Him, but you do. Well, the disciples didn't think they did.

What do you mean, we've seen Him and known Him? You know, earlier in verse 9, He had said, He who has seen Me has seen the Father. And He also says in verse 7, If you had known Me, you would have known My Father also. And from now on, you know Him and have seen Him.

They said, what? Just show us the Father. That's enough for us. They didn't think they had seen Him.

But He says, from now on you have known Him and seen Him. That is to say, you have known and seen Him in Me, but you didn't know that's who you were knowing and seeing. From now on, you know that I'm in the Father, the Father is Me.

When you've seen Me, you've seen the Father. Now you've seen Him and known Him. He's been with you all this time in Me.

But you didn't know Him or see Him. You didn't know that I was Him. And so also, the world does not know or see the Holy Spirit.

But you do, because He is with you. Again, as He has said, they've known and seen the Father. Because when they've seen Him, they've seen the Father.

No doubt He has the same thing in mind, that you've known and seen the Holy Spirit. You've known Him, because He's with you. No doubt in Christ Himself.

As Jesus was with them, the Holy Spirit was with them. They've known Him as He's manifested in Christ. But He says, He will be in you.

So there is a change coming. You have known Him as Me with you. You will know Him in a different sense, as Me in you.

And I will not leave you orphans, but I will come to you. Now this statement, I will come to you, if it referred to the second coming, is quite out of the flow of thought here. Because He continues to talk about coming to them in terms of personal inward



indwelling.

And if He suddenly jumps away from that thought, and says, someday I'll come back, a long time from now, just so you know, but back to my main subject. It seems that the whole discussion is about how He will return and dwell in them, in the person of the Holy Spirit. Because He says in verse 19, A little while longer, and the world will see Me no more.

But you will see Me, because I live, you will live also. Now it's this statement that the world will not see Him, but we will. That makes Judas say, well how are you going to be seen by us, but not by the world? Because they're not understanding that He's talking about the Holy Spirit coming to them.

And He has to explain that to them. I'll reveal Myself to you. I'll come and dwell with you, in you.

This is how it's going to happen. The world will not have this experience, and therefore will not know Me or see Me. You, however, will, because I will come and be with you and reveal Myself to you.

This inward dwelling of Christ. He says, at that day you will know that I am in the Father, verse 20, and you in Me, and I in you. Now there's this three-way indwelling.

He has already mentioned a two-way mutual indwelling, when He says earlier, I am in the Father, and the Father is in Me, in verse 10. The Father being in Him, and Him being in the Father, is a mutual co-inherence. And now He has a three-way co-inherence.

He says, in that day you'll know that I'm in My Father, and you're in Me, and I'm in you. We're kind of all mixed together here. You, Me, and the Father.

Now this is important because He says, I in you. But He has just said, the Holy Spirit will dwell in you. And He's talking about the same time.

He says, you'll know that I am in you. And this is explaining how it is that they will know Him and see Him when the world does not, because He'll be in them. And you'll know that then.

He who has My commandments and keeps them, He it is that loves Me. He who loves Me will be loved by My Father, and I will love Him, My Father and I both will love Him, and will manifest Myself to Him. It's speaking of an inward manifestation, an inward revelation.

In Romans chapter 8, Paul said that the Holy Spirit bears witness with our spirits that we are the children of God. It's verse 16, Romans 8, 16. It says the Spirit Himself bears witness with our spirit that we are the children of God.

So the Holy Spirit is communicating something to our spirit. There's a revelation inside. In 1 John chapter 5, John is no doubt talking about this same thing.

When he says, in 1 John 5, 10, He who believes in the Son of God has the witness in Himself. The person who is a true believer and a true convert, a disciple of Jesus, has a witness in Himself. The Holy Spirit bears witness with our spirits.

There's an inward revelation that we are the children of God. That He dwells in us. That's what Jesus is promising them here.

He says, if you love Me and keep My commandments, My Father and I will love you and I will manifest, I will reveal Myself to you. Now, as far as they knew, He meant visually or physically He'll reappear to them. And that's why Judas asked, well how is it that you'll appear to us and not to the world? They always figured, well, isn't the Messiah supposed to reveal Himself to the world? Isn't everyone supposed to see the Messiah? Isn't He going to be someone that is kind of hard to miss when He's ruling from the throne of David and all that? How will you not show yourself to the world, but to us only? And so He clarifies them, this is not talking about My physical appearance to the world.

That's in verse 23, He starts it out the same way that verse 21 started. If anyone loves Me, he'll keep My word. And My Father will love him and We will come to him and make Our home with him.

This is His answer to the question of how He will make Himself known. How He will manifest Himself. How they will see Him.

How He will come to them. How they will experience and know Him and the world will not. Because they love Him and the world doesn't love Him.

Because they obey Him and the world doesn't obey Him. Therefore, He will make His home with them and not with the world. He lives in the church.

The church is the temple of the Holy Spirit, the habitation of God on earth. The body of Christ and therefore the embodiment of His spirit on earth. Now, all of this seems like almost too magnificent a description of the church.

Because our experience of the church is kind of tawdry, it's kind of blah. I mean the church is not, in many times during history, has not really been this dynamic embodiment of the spirit of Jesus. And with the works of Jesus being done and this manifestation of Christ that all of them are enjoying and knowing Him.

We see that on the day of Pentecost. We see it in the book of Acts. They're excited, they're full of confidence, they're full of power.

They're bold, they're excited. They're hearing from God, they're being directed by God.

And yet, once you get past the book of Acts, and we start looking at the 21st century church, you say, well that doesn't seem like the same thing.

But, it's true, I mean the church now has two ways of being defined. One is that institution that people have joined themselves to. People who don't all necessarily love Him and keep His commandments and therefore don't have His spirit.

And are not the embodiment of Christ. They are not the body of Christ. They're just people who've joined an organization.

But then there's that genuine church made up of the true disciples, the ones who really do love Jesus. That's the defining thing in their lives. They love Him and they obey Him.

That's who they are. That's their identity. And have received His spirit and they are His hands and His feet, His flesh and His bones.

They are His eyes and His ears and members of His body. On earth He dwells in them collectively. The difficulty now that didn't exist in the first century was that they were all meeting together.

All the Christians in one town met together and it was easy to see, oh here's the body, here's the embodiment of Christ here collectively among us. And they did not have a lot of people joining them that weren't real Christians. There was too much persecution and too much house cleaning going on for that.

There were people like Ananias and Sapphira who apparently had joined themselves to the church rather than Christ joining them to the church. They do not appear to be genuine Christians. Satan filled their hearts to lie to the Holy Spirit and they were purged from the church by an act of God.

And it says in Acts chapter 5 after they died, it says, no one else dared to join themselves to the church. But in Acts chapter 2 it says the Lord added to the church daily. The Lord added to the church but people joining themselves stopped after Ananias and Sapphira dropped dead.

You see, a crowd draws a crowd, let's face it. And the early church on the day of Pentecost became an instant crowd, an instant phenomenon, something that drew attention to itself and some people found it attractive and joined themselves to it. But they weren't born again apparently.

They didn't love God. They didn't obey Jesus. That's not what they were about and they didn't have the Spirit of God.

But they were there initially and then God cleaned house, took out a few of them and everyone else was terrified and stood back and said, okay, I don't think I'll join myself to

that group now. But God continued to add to the church daily as many as were being saved. So that the church in the early days did not have a lot of unbelievers hiding out in it like became the case at later points in time and certainly is the case in our time.

And we all know this and we don't want to be uncharitable when we think about our fellow Christians in the church, our fellow church members I should say. We don't want to be the judges and say who is and who isn't a true Christian. But I mean it's obvious some of the people there don't have it as their agenda to obey Jesus.

I mean their life agenda, I mean. And they don't honor Christ in their ways and in their marriages and their finances and all that stuff. They're just not really disciples.

They've joined themselves. But apparently God hasn't joined them like bones are joined together at the joint in a body. God has not added them, has not transplanted them into the body as organs of the body of Christ.

If he had, they would be those who love Jesus and keep his commandments and have his spirit. Now if we had all the people in the world who had those qualifications put them in the same room, you'd see something. It might not be you'd see all the same miracles and everything as the apostolic age.

You might because they do still happen sometimes in some places. But it's not necessary that they always happen every time the church is gathered. But you would find a different dynamic embodied in the group of true disciples when they are gathered together without the chaff among them.

That's what they had in the first century, wheat. And the chaff when it showed up usually was blown away. And so we now have churches that are full of wheat and chaff.

And partly because the church's philosophy encourages this. They kind of want the chaff to come in there. After all they built all those big buildings with all those seats.

It's kind of embarrassing to have a meeting with only a third or a fifth of the seats filled. So bring in all your friends. Bring in everybody.

Go to a door and welcome people to church. Get anybody in there whether they're Christian or not. And then we have a nice big church.

Or is it a church? You know, is it the church? Well, not if they aren't spiritual. Not if they don't love Jesus and keep his commandments and have the Holy Spirit. Then it's not the church at all.

It's just a big religious club. And some true Christians are there. But very frustrated in all likelihood.

Because they're not finding much true fellowship. Not as much as they would expect to

find among so many so-called Christians. And so this is what we're facing today.

But what Jesus said here is still true. If you find the true Christians, then you find the body of Christ. You find different members working and doing the works of Christ.

Not all of them. Miraculous works, of course. The gift of miracles is only one of many gifts.

But you do find the body of Christ functioning in the world as a presence of Christ. A light on a hill and so forth. So that's what Jesus is saying.

That those who love him, keep his commandments, will have him in them. They'll have an inward revelation of him in their midst. He will have come with his Father and made his home in them.

Or with them. And dwelling in them. I will come to you and you'll know that I am in you.

And you're in me and I'm in the Father. That the Father and you and me are all just going to be all merged together in this body. Now, in verse 24 he says, He who does not love me, does not keep my words.

So that's just the opposite of verse 21 and verse 23. And for that matter, verse 15. The one who loves me keeps my commandments.

The one who doesn't love me doesn't. And he's the one who's not going to see me. Who's not going to have me live in him.

And is not going to... That's the world. That's the world that will not see me. Is the one who doesn't love me.

And who does not keep my words. And the word which you hear is not mine but the Father's who sent me. These things I've spoken to you while being present with you.

Now what he implies by that is I'll keep speaking other things to you when I'm not present with you in this sense. Now he's going to clarify that. Or I don't know if he's clarifying it but expanding on it.

In chapter 16. Later in this discourse. In verses 12 and 13 he says.

In John 16.12. I have many things to say to you but you cannot bear them now. However when he, the spirit of truth has come. He will guide you into all truth.

So there are things that I can tell you now and there are things I can't tell you now. There are things that you really can't handle now. So I haven't told them to you now while I'm present with you.

But I will be present with you in another sense when the Holy Spirit comes. And he, I

through him will continue to teach you. He, the Holy Spirit will guide you into all truth.

He'll teach you the things I haven't been able to share with you that I'd like to. Because frankly I'm leaving too soon and you're too immature. It's like what Paul said to the Corinthians.

He said when I was with you I couldn't feed you with solid food. I had to give you milk because you're just babes. In 1 Corinthians 3 the opening verses.

They were not mature enough. You can't really give it all to everybody right away. It's like a person has to kind of grow into.

Some I'm saying you know the body of Christ in the book of Acts took years. Getting to a place where the Holy Spirit could even reveal to them that Gentiles could be among them. I mean they were Jewish Christians only for years after Pentecost.

And then when it came time to kind of let them know that the Gentiles would be joining them. God had to give Peter a vision three times and Peter still wasn't getting it. And then when he did get it and the first Gentiles got saved.

Then the other apostles criticized him. You went into the house of a Gentile and ate with them. These guys were slow learners.

Maybe everybody is. Maybe we are too. The point is there are things that Jesus wants to say.

That sometimes we're just not at the place where we can process it or accept it. It's too strange for us. And that's what Paul said to the Corinthians in 1 Corinthians 3. 1 Corinthians 3, I brethren could not speak to you as to spiritual people.

But as to carnal, as unto babes in Christ. I have fed you with milk and not with solid food. For until now you were not able to receive it.

And even now you're still not able. It's like Jesus said. You're not able to receive some of the things I want to say to you now.

So I'm going to have to wait until the Holy Spirit comes. He'll have to lead you on. Beyond what I can tell you because you're just not mature yet.

Paul tells them in 1 Corinthians 2, verse 2. He says, for I determined not to know anything among you except Jesus Christ and Him crucified. Well, that's the basic milk, isn't it? Nothing but the fact that Jesus died for your sins. That's milk.

He told them in chapter 3, I could only give you milk. I couldn't give you anything meaty. I couldn't give you any solid food when I was with you.

You were too immature. So among you, I determined to only talk about one thing. And that's Jesus Christ and Him crucified.

But look at 1 Corinthians 2, verse 6. However, we speak wisdom among those who are mature. Now, of course, that's not them. As he pointed out, you're not mature.

You're babes. I can't do this with you. There are people who are more mature than you are.

And with them I speak differently than I do to you. I can't give you solid food. I had to just stick with the basic stuff.

Jesus Christ and Him crucified. That's the milk. When I was with you, I determined I couldn't go beyond that with you.

You just couldn't handle it. But when I meet people who are more mature, then, he says, to the mature I speak wisdom. Not the wisdom of this age, nor of the rulers of this age who are coming to nothing.

But we speak the wisdom of God in a mystery. The hidden wisdom, which God ordained before the ages for our glory, which none of the rulers of the age knew, etc. But as it is written, verse 9, Eye has not seen, nor ear heard, nor have entered the heart of man the things which God has prepared for those who love Him.

But God has revealed them to us through His Spirit. For the Spirit searches all things, yes, the deep things of God. Paul said there are some deep things of God, which can only be revealed through the Spirit.

Eyes can't see them. Ears can't hear them. They can't even enter into the imagination of men.

These are things that people can't know, except by the Holy Spirit revealing them. Those are what he calls the deeper things of God, and those are no doubt the solid food that he can share with the mature. Because they are spiritual, and spiritual things are spiritually discerned.

He says that a little later on, in verse 14. The natural man does not receive the things of the Spirit of God for their foolishness to him, nor can he know them because they are spiritually discerned. What Paul is saying is this.

There are things that are basic Christian truths that any immature Christian can be told and hopefully grasp. But there are other things that you can't share with immature people because they don't have the capacity to receive them. They are not spiritual.

They are not mature. He says with mature people I do speak this hidden wisdom, these deep things of God, things that men don't think of on their own, that they can't see and

hear with their eyes. These are things that have to be revealed by the Spirit, the deep things of God.

Those are the things that only spiritual men can receive because they have to be spiritually discerned. But you, he says, are immature and carnal. You are babes and carnal.

You are not spiritual and mature. So Paul is following the same policy with the Corinthians that Jesus followed with his disciples. Recognizing that there are some things they are not ready for yet, but trusting that as they grow into maturity they will be capable of receiving more than they can receive now.

That he can share with them things that he cannot share with them at that early stage. And Jesus says that in John 14, 25, These things I have spoken to you while being present with you, but the Helper, the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in my name, he will teach you all things. I could only tell you this much while I was with you.

And of course, the disciples are having a real hard time even grasping that. And no surprise, I mean, any natural man would have a hard time understanding what he is talking about. A spiritual man, not so much.

Not so much of a problem. But a natural man, yes, because, I mean, first of all, the Holy Spirit had not yet been given. It takes a spiritual discernment to recognize that Jesus is present in the body of Christ made up of individual human beings.

A natural man could see Jesus, the man, the one individual, say, that's the Messiah, that's the Christ. There's the body of Christ right there. But it takes a spiritual person to recognize the spiritual body comprised of members that don't look like Jesus, but have him inside of them.

And they don't look like individual body parts, they look like complete human beings, but they're really individual body parts of the body of Christ. Some have this function, some have that function, just like body parts have. This is a spiritual concept, it's spiritually discerned.

The disciples were barely able to accept, even when he spoke somewhat plainly, although what he spoke plainly is mystical stuff, mysterious stuff. He said, now, I've trusted you with this much information now. And as we saw in chapter 16, he says, ah, there's some things I can't tell you now.

When the Holy Spirit comes, he'll tell you more. And so he says it here too. The helper, the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in my name, he will teach you all things and bring to your remembrance all things that I said to you.

This last line, that the Holy Spirit would bring to their remembrance all things that he had



said to them, is good to know because we trust in them for the record of what Jesus said, essentially in the gospels, the written gospels. They are our most complete and certainly most reliable record of what Jesus said and did. Now, they were written either by apostles or under the supervision of the apostles.

John was an apostle. Matthew was an apostle. Mark and Luke were not apostles, but they traveled with and worked under the supervision of apostles.

Mark under Peter, Luke under Paul. And therefore, their memories were adequate, not because of their natural memories so much, although even that could have been adequate. I'm sure Jesus' things he said and did were so memorable that many of them would be hard to forget.

But we have the promise that they would also have the assistance of the Holy Spirit reminding them of what Jesus said. So that although the apostles do not claim inspiration when they write the gospels, Jesus claimed some kind of inspiration for them, at least in jogging their memories when they're reporting what Jesus said that they would remember correctly what he said. And therefore, the Holy Spirit was involved, you know, inspiring the men who wrote the gospels, not in the sense that maybe sometimes we think of and when we're thinking, maybe I might consider childishly about the subject, like there's a, you know, they're just a channel for the Holy Spirit to just put down his words on paper.

Rather, the Holy Spirit reminded them and they wrote in their own words and what seemed to them like their own memories. But behind the scenes, the Holy Spirit was reminding them of what Jesus did and said. So, and that doesn't mean that they wrote it necessarily perfectly, since they didn't always use perfect grammar and just because the Holy Spirit reminded them what he said, that doesn't mean that they'd always spell every word correctly or something.

There wasn't magic going on while they were writing. They were writing like ordinary people write, but their memories were enhanced by the Holy Spirit's reminding them of what they were writing about, the story of Jesus. Now, let's just take the rest of this chapter real quickly.

Peace, verse 27, I leave with you. My peace I give to you. Not as the world gives do I give to you.

Let not your heart be troubled, neither let it be afraid. You have heard me say to you, I am going away and coming back to you. If you loved me, you would rejoice because I said I'm going to the Father, for the Father is greater than I. And now I have told you before it comes that when it does come to pass, you may believe.

I will no longer talk much with you, for the ruler of this world is coming, and he has

nothing in me. But that the world may know that I love the Father, and as the Father gave me commandments, so I do. Arise, let us go from here.

Now, I might just say about this last line, arise, let us go from here. There are some scholars who would like to transpose that statement to the end of chapter 16, because the conversation continues in chapters 15 and 16 without an apparent break. And it doesn't seem like they left the room at that time.

They certainly didn't break off the conversation. There are a number of ways to understand it without moving it. We could leave it where it is and still understand it.

A couple of different possibilities. One is that arise, let us go from here. So they got up from the table and they started getting ready to go.

Cleaning up after themselves, putting on their clothes, getting organized to go outside. And while they did so, Jesus kept talking to them. Because it is mostly Jesus talking in chapters 15 and 16.

And they did arise from the table at this point and began to prepare to leave. And while they were preparing to leave, he continued to talk along the lines of chapters 15 and 16. Another possibility is that they actually did leave the room at this point.

But Jesus still talked to them as they walked along. The next thing he talked about in chapter 15, at the beginning of 15, was I'm the vine and you're the branches. It's not hard to imagine that he might have been walking alongside a vineyard or a vine that was growing in somebody's yard.

Every man had his own vine and fig tree, right? So as they're walking through Jerusalem on their way to Gethsemane, he could be pointing at a vine and saying I'm the true vine. And my father is the husbandman. And using that as an object lesson, even as they're walking down the street.

And that he could certainly have continued the conversation with them as they walked through the streets. Though we have to realize this would be late night. And making too much noise would draw a lot of attention.

And they were somewhat trying to stay under the radar. Jesus and his disciples were trying to avoid a lot of notice. And to be talking loudly enough for eleven men to hear him as they walked down the street would probably be loud enough for the neighbors to hear who were trying to sleep.

It's hard to know exactly how we're supposed to picture this. John, who's recording it, was there. And he certainly would know that by recording this statement arise, let's go from here, at this point, that that might be strange when the conversation goes on.

But he puts it there because that's the point at which Jesus said it. So whether they continued talking in the upper room as they got ready to leave or were talking as they walked through the streets, we don't know. In any case, that's how this chapter ends.

Now, in verse 27, he said, My peace I give to you. In chapter 15, verse 9, he says at the end of verse 9, Abide in my love. And in verse 11 of chapter 15, he says, These things I have spoken to you that my joy may remain in you.

He talks about my peace, my love, and my joy. Not surprisingly, love, peace, joy, these are the first three items that Paul lists as fruits of the Spirit in Galatians chapter 5, in verse 22. The fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, gentleness, and so forth.

But these are the fruits of the Holy Spirit in their lives. And he's been telling them, I'm going to send the Holy Spirit. And among the other advantages of having my Holy Spirit is that you will have my peace.

You will abide in my love. My joy will be in you. In other words, you're going to have these characteristics that I have.

Mine. Not that you'll just have joy, and peace, and love, but you'll have my peace, my joy, my love. You'll be experiencing my feelings and exhibiting my traits because I will be in you.

And I will be living through you. And you will be my body. That's essentially what it is.

My Spirit in you will be producing these things that the Spirit produces in me, that you see in me. That which you've seen in me will be in you now. So, I'm leaving you with peace.

And I'm giving you my peace. It's not the same kind of peace the world gives, he said. Why is it not the same? Because the world's peace is contingent on having tranquil circumstances.

Anyone in the world can be peaceful when they're in a secure situation and all is going well. Peace is sort of the natural human response to tranquil circumstances and desirable circumstances. However, his peace is that which is unshakable, uninterrupted by difficult circumstances.

They had seen him face opposition from his critics, the chief priests and the Pharisees and so forth. And they'd seen him conduct himself with composure, with calm. Even when they took up stones to stone him, he would just talk to them, you know, I did many great works among you from my father, which of these have you stoned me for? He didn't ever seem to be ruffled.

He got angry at times when he felt the anger of God toward people who were

desecrating his father's house and so forth. But he was himself a man of peace and unafraid and not having anxiety. There were a few times when, as I say, his anger or even what appears to be anxiety when he sweat great drops of blood up here.

But these are cases where he's, I believe, experiencing something unique. His anger and driving the money changers out of the temple is his zeal for his father's house, which is also his own house. He's angry on behalf of his father.

His sweating great drops of blood, no doubt, is because of the unusual degree of anguish, the supernatural thing he was about to bear, bearing the sins of the world and such upon himself. This is something that no one can really understand and no doubt anyone would be stressed by it. But he was a man who was generally calm, generally peaceful.

He was a peacemaker and he possessed peace. He said, it's not like the world's peace. You're going to have a supernatural peace.

The peace that passes understanding, as Paul called it in Philippians chapter 4, verse 6. Be anxious for nothing, but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving, let your requests be known to God and the peace of God, or the peace of Christ it could be, which passes understanding will guard your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus. This is the kind of peace Jesus had. It surpassed understanding.

You can always understand why you're feeling peaceful when it's a blissful situation, but when it's a hectic or crazy situation and you're still at peace, that's supernatural. You can't understand why you'd be at peace then. That surpasses human understanding.

That's a peace not like the world gives, but the kind that Jesus gives. And he says to them in John 14, verse 27, let not your heart be troubled. That's how he began.

Chapter 14, verse 1, let not your heart be troubled. But now he adds, neither let it be afraid. You've heard me say to you, I'm going away and I'm coming back to you.

If you loved me, you'd rejoice because I said I'm going to my Father, for the Father is greater than I. I'm going to a better situation. I'm going to be with my Father again. He's greater than I am.

What's that mean? He earlier said, if you've seen me, you've seen the Father. I'm in the Father and the Father is me. What does he mean, the Father is greater than I am? What he means apparently is, I have taken on a reduction in my experience in becoming a human being.

Now in some cases, in some respects, it was not a reduction, but an amplification because he added to his experience, human experience, which he hadn't had before. He now had the experience of being God and of being a human. Something new.

It expanded his horizons, but it still limited him. As a human being, he had to be in one place at a time. He had to have the limitations of humanity upon him.

He had to live under our kind of handicaps. But the Father doesn't have any of those handicaps. The Father is greater.

He's everywhere at once. He knows everything. He's got all power.

Jesus didn't have any of those qualities while he was here. He's going back to where he was before. He existed before in the form of God, but he emptied himself so that he lived in a restricted form on this earth.

But now I'm going back, he indicates, to my Father, to this rather more unlimited condition. In chapter 17, when he's praying to his Father, he says, Father, give me the glory again that I had with you before. He's going back to his infinite condition rather than his finite and limited condition.

You should be glad for me for this. The Father is greater than I am and that's what I'm going back to. What I came from.

And he says in verse 29, And now I have told you before it comes that when it does come to pass, you may believe. We saw a similar statement already in chapter 13 quite a long time ago. Chapter 13, verse 19, where Jesus said, Behold, I tell you before it comes, so that when it does come to pass, you may believe that I am He.

Essentially the same phrase except adding that I am He. In that case, in chapter 13, he was predicting the betrayal. Judas' betrayal.

He says, I'm letting you know this so that when it happens, you'll see and you'll believe I'm who I said I am because I knew this. And no one has told me about it. And now he's talking about the experience the disciples will have after he's gone.

He says, Now, you'll see when this happens that I told you about it and you'll know that I knew it and therefore you'll believe in me. And so he says in verse 30, I will no longer talk much with you for the ruler of this world is coming. Now this expression, the ruler of this world, is found two other times in the Gospel of John and never elsewhere.

The ruler of this world is referring to the ruler of those who don't love Jesus, who are called the world. And it is Satan, of course, that's referred to. In the first instance, it was in chapter 12, in verse 31, that's when Jesus said, Now is the judgment of this world.

Now the ruler of this world will be cast out. So he referred to Satan at that time as the ruler of this world who would be cast out. Ahead of us in chapter 16, he's going to use the expression again in chapter 16, verse 11, where he says that the Holy Spirit will convict the world of judgment because the ruler of this world is judged.

So he has said in chapter 12 that the judgment of the world is going to see the ruler of this world cast out. And in chapter 16, 11, that the ruler of the world is judged. This is at the cross.

But at this point, he says, the ruler of the world is coming and he has nothing on me. He's got nothing he can lay hold of in me. The ruler of this world is the one who comes to examine, who comes to condemn, the one who comes to accuse.

But there's nothing he can accuse me of. There's nothing he can examine as closely as he wants. He's got nothing on me.

I have confronted him. I have been challenged by him. I've spent 40 days fasting in the wilderness while he threw the hardest stuff he had at me.

He didn't get at me at all. He has nothing on me. So he's coming to examine me.

He's coming to accuse and try to condemn me. But he doesn't have anything on me. Now, I'm going to be condemned.

But not for anything I've done. He's going to take the sins of us on himself and he'll be condemned and die for that. But the ruler of this world doesn't have anything he can do to him.

That's why Jesus could have called 12 legions of angels and they would have delivered him so that he wouldn't die. He didn't have to die. He was doing that voluntarily.

And that's what he says in verse 31. But that the world may know that I love the Father. And as the Father gave me commandments, so I do.

In other words, the ruler of this world couldn't kill me because he doesn't have anything on me. I can't die for my sins because I haven't sinned. I don't have the death penalty hanging over me like everybody else does.

The devil has something on everybody else and he has the power of death. That's what it says in Hebrews 2.14. That Jesus through death destroyed him that had the power of death. That is the devil, it says.

Jesus' death destroyed Satan and Satan is described as the one who had the power of death. Hebrews 2.14. So, why did he have the power of death? Because he's the one who could lay charges against man. He's the one who could say they've sinned, they must die.

He's the accuser. He's the prosecuting attorney. And he comes to prosecute Jesus and there's nothing he can accuse him of.

He's got nothing on him. He can't kill him. But Jesus says, but I'm going to die anyway

because I love my Father.

I'm doing this not because I have to die, not because the devil has the same stuff on me he's got on other people and he has the right to take me down. He doesn't. But I'm going to the cross because I want the world to see that I love my Father and that I have a commandment from my Father.

And just like I want you to love me and keep my commandments, I love my Father and keep His commandments. And I'm going to demonstrate that by going to the cross. And so although I'm going to die just like everybody else dies, I'm not going to die for the same reasons that everyone else dies.

Everyone else dies because the devil has something on them. He's got something that he can use against them to take them down. He doesn't have anything on me.

He can't take me down. But I'm going down anyway because I love my Father. Now what's interesting about this is of course the Bible does teach that Jesus died because He loved us.

But it also teaches, and it's perhaps more fundamental to His motivation, that He died because He loved the Father. You see, it was the Father who loved the world so much that He sent His only begotten Son to die. That's of course how John 3.16 reads, but a similar verse, even more clear on that point, 1 John 4.9 says, In this the love of God was manifested toward us, that God sent His only begotten Son into the world that we might live through Him.

In this is love, not that we love God, but that He loved us and sent His Son to be the propitiation for our sins. Because God loved us, He sent His Son. And because the Son loved the Father, He came.

Now of course Jesus loved us too because He and the Father are one. They're in one accord. Whom the Father loves, Jesus loves.

But the point here is, we sometimes think of the Father as the one who had something, a grudge against us. And Jesus is the one who is somewhat more our friend in heaven. Like before Jesus came, the Father was angry at us.

He spitefully wanted to hurl lightning bolts at us. He wanted to smash us. But Jesus came along and said, No, no, Father, please, please, let me do something for them.

Let me see if I can atone for their sins so you don't have to be so angry at them. So we get the impression that the Father was the one who was against us and Jesus was the one who was for us. But the Bible says it was the Father who was for us and sent His Son.

And Jesus was for His Father. He loved His Father. And so He went to the cross.

He had a commandment from His Father. So He says in verse 31, But that the world may know that I love the Father, and as the Father gave Me commandment, so I do. What? The Father gave Him the commandment to do what? To die for us.

Now Jesus could have turned down the assignment. He could have called twelve legions of angels if He had wished to disobey His Father. But it was unthinkable to Him to disobey His Father because He loved His Father.

And if you love Me, you keep My commandments. If you love the Father, you keep His commandments. Jesus loved His Father.

And so He died to fulfill the commandments of His Father. This doesn't mean that Jesus didn't love us. It just means that the focus is on God's love for us.

And God is a friend of mankind. God is so friendly, in fact, that He sacrificed for us to be saved. That was the love of God manifested.

And so rather than think of Jesus dying on the cross as His love manifested to save us from the anger of God, His death is His love for His Father, doing what His Father wanted Him to do. And so He then says, Arise, let us go from here. And presumably they got up from the table at that point.

How long it took Him to get out the door, we can't say. It wouldn't take an awful long time for the rest of the conversation to take place if we read it without my comments. It does take us a long time to get through it.

But if you just read it through, it only takes a few minutes. So, actually, everything that continued to be said in chapters 15 and 16 could, conceivably, have been said even before they made it to the door. They're putting on their coats and their shoes and things like that.

But we don't have to commit to any particular picture of where these other chapters took place, either in the room or out in the street. They were obviously on their way to Gethsemane. And in the remaining part of the discourse, He is really discussing all the same things.

There's virtually nothing He brings up that isn't already introduced in chapter 14. But He revisits these topics, and in some cases amplifies them, sometimes just repeats them. But we'll have to save that for another time.