

Who is the Holy Spirit

In John's gospel, there is a dialogue between Jesus and His disciples on Thursday night before His crucifixion. In the 13th chapter, Jesus washes the feet of the disciples and tells them that He will soon be leaving them. We may remember that Peter vowed to follow Jesus everywhere, even to the point of laying down his life for Jesus (John 13:37).

In the 14th chapter, Jesus begins with comforting words. The words found here are used often at funerals where Jesus speaks of many places for disciples to live in God's house. Thomas wants to know the way to follow Jesus and Philip wants to see God.

Philip said to Him, "Lord, show us the Father, and it is enough for us." Jesus said to him, "Have I been so long with you, and yet you have not come to know Me, Philip? He who has seen Me has seen the Father; how can you say, 'Show us the Father'? Do you not believe that I am in the Father, and the Father is in Me? The words that I say to you I do not speak on My own initiative, but the Father abiding in Me does His works. (John 14:8-10 NASB)

In this passage, Jesus speaks of God living (abiding) in Him. This is a unique relationship. Jesus on other occasions mentioned about Him living in God and God living in Him and we, as a vine, live in Him and He in us. Sometimes it is difficult to follow. We need to pause and follow what Jesus is telling His disciple at this point in His ministry.

He has told His disciples that He is leaving and returning to the Father. They have been with Him for over three years and most thought that He was about to assume the role of king to unify the nation of Israel and oust the Romans. So, now they are concerned about where they stand as Jesus prepares to leave.

I will ask the Father, and He will give you another Helper (*Parakletos*), that He may be with you forever; that is the Spirit of truth, whom the world cannot receive, because it does not see Him or know Him, but you know Him because He abides with you and will be in you.

"I will not leave you as orphans; I will come to you. (John 14:16-18 NASB)

The Greek word, παράκλητος (*paraklētōs*) is one who comes to bring exhortation, consoling, comfort, or one who intercedes. A person who serves as an advocate or comforter. (Vine's Complete Expository Dictionary.)

Who is this comforter or helper that Jesus promised? Is He only promised to the apostles and is not someone who will be a part of our life? This morning we will look at the role of the Holy Spirit with the hope that we will better understand His role and may be open to seeing Him each day.

I do want us to understand that the Holy Spirit is promised to all believers. Jesus mentions this in an earlier chapter of John. Jesus was at the Feast of the Tabernacles when, in chapter 7 of John we read: **Now on the last day, the great day of the feast, Jesus stood and cried out, saying, "If anyone is thirsty, let him come to Me and drink. He who believes in Me, as the Scripture said, 'From his innermost being will flow rivers of living water.'" But this He spoke of the Spirit, whom those who believed in Him were to receive; for the Spirit was not yet given, because Jesus was not yet glorified. (John 7:37-39 NASB)**

The reference to living waters flowing from the innermost parts is found several times in Isaiah. John points out that these refreshing waters from within is speaking of **the Spirit, whom those who believed in Him were to receive**. So, the Holy Spirit is for all believers. What does the Holy Spirit do? How does the Holy Spirit complete the work of Jesus? Why don't I feel the Holy

Spirit? These are a few of the questions we will spend our remaining time addressing this morning.

First, the Holy Spirit gives life. There is one of those inane questions posted on Facebook that asks if you can go to heaven without the Holy Spirit. The answer supplied is you can't go to Walmart without the Holy Spirit. This is a silly exchange but it reveals a truth. Consider this passage from Job the 34th chapter.

“If He should determine to do so, if He should gather to Himself His spirit and His breath, all flesh would perish together, and man would return to dust. (Job 34:14-15 NASB)

David saw the same connection between God's Spirit and life as seen in Psalm 104.

You hide Your face, they are dismayed; You take away their spirit, they expire and return to their dust. You send forth Your Spirit, they are created;

And You renew the face of the ground. (Psalm 104:29-30 NASB)

The essence of life that has been present from the creation and is found when Genesis opens with God's Spirit moved over the face of the deep. Jesus, in one of His most profound messages, tells us that it is the Spirit that gives life.

It is the Spirit who gives life; the flesh profits nothing; the words that I have spoken to you are spirit and are life. (John 6:63 NASB)

We could continue to demonstrate this point. However, we see that God's Holy Spirit gives life. This is life on the physical level as well as the spiritual level.

Second, the Holy Spirit gives power to do God's will. It is important that we note that all power received from God through the Holy Spirit has a purpose and may not be misused.

In the Old Testament, God gave His Spirit to individuals to prepare them for service. In Numbers, we read where Joshua is being prepared to take his leadership position over the children of Israel. God has given Joshua His Spirit.

So, the LORD said to Moses, “Take Joshua the son of Nun, a man in whom is the Spirit, and lay your hand on him. (Numbers 27:18 NASB)

We could explore many more cases found in the book of Judges, but in the interest of time, we will move to 1 Samuel the 16th chapter. As Samuel anoints David, we see God's Spirit coming on David.

Then Samuel took the horn of oil and anointed him in the midst of his brothers; and the Spirit of the LORD came mightily upon David from that day forward. (1 Samuel 16:13 NASB)

The Spirit came upon Saul when he was anointed as king (1 Samuel 10:10) and left him when David became king (1 Samuel 16:14). Each of these men had a job to do and God gave them His Spirit so they could do their tasks.

In the New Testament, Jesus promises the Holy Spirit to come to His disciples: **I will ask the Father, and He will give you another Helper, that He may be with you forever; that is the Spirit of truth, whom the world cannot receive, because it does not see Him or know Him, but you know Him because He abides with you and will be in you. (John 14:16-17 NASB)**

Paul writes to the church in Corinth about the many and varied gifts of the Spirit. We will not read through this at this time but I encourage you to read 1 Corinthians 12:4-11. God has a plan for the church (the body of Christ) and He is sending the Holy Spirit to meet each need. Paul is speaking in similar terms in his letter to the Ephesians as he talks about the different offices and callings for the church. Each person has been called for a specific task for one reason: **for the**

equipping of the saints for the work of service, to the building up of the body of Christ; (Ephesians 4:12 NASB)

Third, the Holy Spirit draws us to a point of decision. When we read our Bibles or hear the words of God preached, there comes a time to decide. This point of decision varies with each individual. Seeds are planted and will develop according to the individual situation.

Jesus clearly tells us that the work of the Holy Spirit is to bring us to a point of conviction. **And He, when He comes, will convict the world concerning sin and righteousness and judgment; concerning sin, because they do not believe in Me; and concerning righteousness, because I go to the Father and you no longer see Me; and concerning judgment, because the ruler of this world has been judged. (John 16:8-11 NASB)**

Fourth, the Holy Spirit reveals God's message to us. While Jesus was on earth, He told His disciples the message from God. The word they wrote down for us are guided by the Holy Spirit. Jesus told His disciples in John 16:13-15 they would receive guidance from the Holy Spirit. The guidance from the Holy Spirit would be coming directly from God.

But when He, the Spirit of truth, comes, He will guide you into all the truth; for He will not speak on His own initiative, but whatever He hears, He will speak; and He will disclose to you what is to come. He will glorify Me, for He will take of Mine and will disclose it to you. All things that the Father has are Mine; therefore, I said that He takes of Mine and will disclose it to you. (John 16:13-15 NASB)

Later, Peter writes to tell us that all scripture (both Old and New Testament) is due to the direct action of the Holy Spirit.

But know this first of all, that no prophecy of Scripture is *a matter* of one's own interpretation, for no prophecy was ever made by an act of human will, but men moved by the Holy Spirit spoke from God. (2 Peter 1:20-21 NASB)

Fifth, the Holy Spirit brings us comfort as He helps us communicate with God.

In the same way the Spirit also helps our weakness; for we do not know how to pray as we should, but the Spirit Himself intercedes for *us* with groanings too deep for words; and He who searches the hearts knows what the mind of the Spirit is, because He intercedes for the saints according to *the will of God*. (Romans 8:26-27 NASB)

The last thing we will consider this morning is the Holy Spirit is given to us as a pledge or down payment of our salvation and coming inheritance.

In Him (Jesus), you also, after listening to the message of truth, the gospel of your salvation—having also believed, you were sealed in Him with the Holy Spirit of promise, who is given as a pledge of our inheritance, with a view to the redemption of *God's own possession*, to the praise of His glory. (Ephesians 1:13-14 NASB)

The Holy Spirit is still alive and active within God's church. The Holy Spirit was promised and was sent. He is living within those who are members of God's family.

If we don't feel His presence and power, then we need to pray to God to open our eyes and hearts to see and feel His Holy Spirit living in us.