

Congregational handout; outline sermon text on following pages

Sermon Notes & References

The Spirit's Ministry

John 14:15-18, 25-26; 15:26-27; 16:5-15

February 19, 2017

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^A Matthew 11:27; 1 Corinthians 2:10-11

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^C Luke 12:11-12

^D John 13:33, 36, 14:12, 7:39

^E John 12:31

^F Ephesians 4:30; 1 Thessalonians 5:19

A. Introduction

1. Introducing the Holy Spirit

- a. these disciples knew of the Holy Spirit
 - (A) from the OT: men & women working great things in His power
 - (B) from their observation of John the Baptist; of Jesus
 - (C) and from His work in them in their healing & teaching tour
 - (D) but they have yet to know His permanent residence within them
- b. in His last hours with His disciples, Jesus prepares them for that experience by describing the Spirit's coming role in the believer
- c. John 14-16, then, contain an introduction to the NT work of the Holy Spirit, which will be further explained
 - (A) by the events in the book of Acts
 - (B) by the teaching in the letters written by the apostles
 - (C) and by the Revelation to John on the Isle of Patmos
- d. these chapters, as well as describing the ministry of the Holy Spirit
 - (A) reveal some basic but important truths concerning His nature
 - (B) which we should first note before looking at His ministry

2. The Spirit a Person, Not an Influence

- a. to many, the Holy Spirit is a vague expression of God's working
- b. to the Jews, it is the Divine residence of God with His people
- c. But Jesus describes Him as a Person
 - (A) He has a distinct "self-consciousness" or "self-awareness"
 - (B) shown by the fact that He will not speak "on His own initiative" or, literally, "from His own Self" – a Self distinct from the Father & Son
 - (C) He carries out the actions of a Person: He hears, He speaks, He tells, announces or discloses, He leads or guides, and so on
- d. although the word for spirit in Greek is neutral in gender (i.e., it is easy to make reference to the spirit as "it"), nevertheless references to the Spirit in these chapters are "He", sometimes an emphatic "He"!
- e. so the Holy Spirit may be addressed in prayer, called upon to carry out His ministry in some fashion

3. The Spirit, Son & Father Distinct

a. They interact with One Another

- (A) the Son prays to the Father
- (B) the Son asks the Father to send the Spirit
- (C) the Son will Himself send the Spirit
- (D) the Spirit proceeds from the Father
- (E) the Spirit glorifies the Son

b. Their roles differ, as for example

- (A) Salvation comes to mankind by the will of the Father
- (B) the Son obeys that will in order to achieve salvation
- (C) the Holy Spirit applies the Son's work to save a person
- (D) yet, though there is a form of subordination of roles, ...

c. In the One Divine Being they are equal, as for example seen in

- (A) Father & Son, as seen in Matthew 11:27, when Jesus said, "All things have been handed over to Me by My Father; and no one knows the Son, except the Father; nor does anyone know the Father, except the Son, and anyone to whom the Son wills to reveal Him."
- (B) Father & Spirit, as seen in 1 Corinthians 2:10-11, "For to us God revealed them through the Spirit; for the Spirit searches all things, even the depths of God. For who among men knows the thoughts of a man except the spirit of the man, which is in him? Even so the thoughts of God no one knows except the Spirit of God."
- (C) the community of ownership of all Three in John 16:14-15, "... for He shall take of Mine, and shall 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 16:14-15)

d. so let us keep these in mind as we look at the ministry of the Spirit, the Paraclete: Helper, Comforter, Counsellor, Advocate, Prosecutor

B. The Spirit Helps 14:15-18

1. 14:15 "If you love Me, you will keep My commandments. 16 And I will ask the Father, and He will give you another Helper, that He may be with you forever; 17 that is the Spirit of truth, whom the world cannot receive, because it does not behold Him or know Him, but you know Him because He abides with you, and will be in you. 18 I will not leave you as orphans; I will come to you."

2. What Kind of Help?

a. the verses at the beginning and end of this section give the context

(A) these disciples are entering a new stage in their spiritual journey

(1) when Israel was on the verge of entering the Promised Land, God through Moses reminds them of the years of training that they had just gone through, and why: disobedience; then says,

(2) "And now, O Israel, listen to the statutes and the judgments which I am teaching you to perform, in order that you may live and go in and take possession of the land which the Lord, the God of your fathers, is giving you." (Deuteronomy 4:1)

(B) likewise Jesus first tells them to keep His commandments

(a) chief among which are that they should love one another

(b) but how is that possible? Lord, how can I love that person?

(c) Jesus, how often you had correct us on the way!

(C) the last verse gives assurance that though Jesus is leaving them, he is not abandoning them: he will come to them

b. He will come to them in the Person of another Helper

(A) or Comforter, which means a person bringing strength

(B) this One is the Spirit of truth – the Holy Spirit

c. and in these names, and from this context, we can see the kind of help

(A) it is spiritual help: the help need to keep His commandments

(B) the help that gives the disciple spiritual strength

(C) that spiritual strength has its foundation firmly upon the truth

(D) it is Jesus who is the Truth, but by the Spirit's permanent abiding in a disciple's life, Jesus, the Truth is also there

C. The Spirit Teaches 14:25-26

1. 14:25 "These things I have spoken to you, while abiding with you. 26 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 that I said to you."

2. His Teaching Methods

a. Jesus, when He entered the stream of mankind, was God's representative on earth: Immanuel, God With Us

(A) now the Holy Spirit enters those who belong to Jesus, and becomes resident in their lives, representing God to His people; God With Us

- (B) note the Triune relationship in His coming: Holy Spirit sent by the Father in the Name of the Son – and all that Name expresses
- (C) the Spirit's work in this respect complements the work of the Great Teacher – speaking to the inner, spiritual ear of Jesus' disciples
 - (1) what Jesus has said, He will bring to their remembrance
 - (2) what Jesus meant, He will bring to their understanding
 - (3) what they heard they will commit to writing for us who follow
 - (4) hence the Holy Spirit's work goes on today in teaching us

D. The Spirit Witnesses 15:26-27

1. 15:26 "When the Helper comes, whom I will send to you from the Father, that is the Spirit of truth, who proceeds from the Father, He will bear witness of Me, 27 and you will bear witness also, because you have been with Me from the beginning."

2. Teaching and Counselling

- a. witnessing is a cooperative effort of God's Holy Spirit and God's people
 - (A) to do it in one's own strength & abilities is to fail
 - (B) Jesus taught His disciples (and us), "11 And when they bring you before the synagogues and the rulers and the authorities, do not become anxious about how or what you should speak in your defense, or what you should say; 12 for the Holy Spirit will teach you in that very hour what you ought to say." (Luke 12:11-12)
 - (C) so, this is part of the Spirit's teaching ministry
- b. but also, it places a responsibility on the Christian to study God's Word
 - (A) so that the Spirit can bring it to our memory
 - (B) necessity of a quiet time – for prayer – for reading the Bible (smart phones make this simple!) – regular – undisturbed – not easy
- c. in this way, the Spirit bears witness of Jesus Christ to our spirit
- d. and both through us & directly to the spirit of others as the words of the Scriptures are proclaimed
- e. as the hymn says

Channels only, blessed Master –
 But with all Thy wondrous pow'r
 Flowing through us, Thou canst use us
 Evr'y day and evr'y hour. –{2}.

E. The Spirit Prosecutes 16:5-11

1. The Expediency of Jesus' Departure (16:5-7)

a. 16:5 "But now I am going to Him who sent Me; and none of you asks Me, 'Where are You going?' 6 But because I have said these things to you, sorrow has filled your heart. 7 But I tell you the truth, it is to your advantage that I go away; for if I do not go away, the Helper shall not come to you; but if I go, I will send Him to you."

b. Jesus must go, but where?

(A) earlier in the evening, Jesus said, "Little children, I am with you a little while longer. You shall seek Me; and as I said to the Jews, I now say to you also, 'Where I am going, you cannot come.'" (John 13:33)

(B) "Simon Peter said to Him, 'Lord, where are You going?' Jesus answered, 'Where I go, you cannot follow Me now; but you shall follow later.'" (John 13:36) – Peter had asked in a physical sense

(C) but none asked about "... because I go to the Father." (John 14:12)

(D) their thoughts had all been on their own situation

c. now Jesus talks about what they had missed: what was the importance of His going to His Father – it was a Divine necessity

(A) the "why?" is not explained here; the factual truth is stated

(B) without Jesus' departure the coming of the Holy Spirit in His fullness to carry out His ministry could not take place

(C) John 7:39 implies that the cross was a prerequisite "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."

(D) so Jesus must complete His work, return to the Father, before sending the Spirit to carry out His necessary ministry to Christians

(E) and also the Spirit's work to unbelievers, to an antagonistic world

2. The Holy Spirit's Relation to the World (16:8-11)

a. 16:8 "And He, when He comes, will convict the world concerning sin, and righteousness, and judgment; 9 concerning sin, because they do not believe in Me; 10 and concerning righteousness, because I go to the Father, and you no longer behold Me; 11 and concerning judgment, because the ruler of this world has been judged."

b. we have said that the word Paraclete means Counsellor (in the sense of counsellor-at-law) or Advocate

(A) at first sight, that does not seem to apply here –

(1) the word translated 'convict' has also been rendered as 'rebuke, reprove, expose, show to be guilty, convince

(2) the Spirit seems to be an accuser, not a defender in these verses

- (3) it is clear when one sees the Holy Spirit is the Son's Advocate
 - (4) the world – composed of unbelieving, rebellious mankind – has sentenced the Lord of Glory to death; to death on the cross
 - (5) and the Holy Spirit's work is to show to the world how wrong they were in this
 - (6) as such, He becomes the Prosecutor, demonstrating that the world – rebellious mankind – is sinful, unjust, deserving death
 - (7) and this is expressed in three ways
- c. sin: the refusal of the world – at that time, the Jewish people; now, society and nations – to believe in Jesus Christ
- (A) that He is the Son of God
 - (B) that He is the Saviour
 - (C) is both a root and an evidence that they are sinful
- d. righteousness: Jesus lived in righteousness before the world – “which of you convicts me of sin?” – and they refused to recognise that fact
- (A) proving their own unrighteousness: they did not recognise the real
 - (B) with Jesus' leaving the world, the Spirit will give proof of the fact
 - (C) Barclay: “When you think of it, it is an amazing thing that men should put their trust for all eternity in a crucified Jewish criminal. What convinces men that this crucified Jew is the Son of God? That is the work of the Holy Spirit. It is the Holy Spirit who convinces men of the sheer righteousness of Christ...” –{3}.
- e. judgement: Jesus' obedience to the Father's will, to glorify the Father has brought judgement upon the ruler, the prince of this world, Satan
- (A) the Father has spoken, & Jesus says, “Now judgment is upon this world; now the ruler of this world shall be cast out.” (John 12:31 NAS)
 - (B) if its ruler – the evil one whom the world follows in its rebellion against God – if he has been judged, if he stands condemned
 - (C) then Satan's subjects, the sinners, those who are unrighteous, likewise stand condemned already (John 3:18, 36)
 - (D) this evidence the Holy Spirit will lay before the courts

F. The Spirit Reveals 16:12-15

- 1. (or) The Holy Spirit's Relation to the Disciples – 16:12 “I have many more things to say to you, but you cannot bear them now. 13 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. 14 He shall glorify Me; for He shall take of Mine, and shall disclose it to you. 15 All things that the Father has are Mine; therefore I said, that He takes of Mine, and will disclose it to you.”

2. Revelation is Progressive

- a. Rome wasn't built in a day; the believer doesn't mature in an hour!
- b. children of God have need of the ongoing revelation of the Holy Spirit throughout their lives – and many principles of this are listed here
 - (A) disciples not at a point where they could receive these sayings
 - (B) Spirit will guide them into all truth
 - (C) Spirit speaks on behalf of the Trinity
 - (D) Spirit tells of things to come; He has the truth of the future, the promises of which are found throughout all the rest of the N.T.
 - (E) Spirit glorifies the Son, dispenses what has been given to the Son
- c. and we see this progression in the NT Scriptures themselves
 - (A) the Gospels record the life and words of Jesus Christ
 - (B) the book of Acts documents the coming of the Holy Spirit and His relation to believers, both individually and corporately (the church)
 - (C) the epistles contain the ongoing teaching by the Spirit of the truths of God, of salvation, of Christian living
 - (D) the book of Revelation (but not alone) reveals things to come: the movement of events to the spiritual climax of God's final victory

G. Conclusion

1. The Two Spiritual Commands

- a. “And do not grieve the Holy Spirit of God, by whom you were sealed for the day of redemption.” (Ephesians 4:30 NAS)
- b. “Do not quench the Spirit;” (1 Thessalonians 5:19 NAS)
- c. our closing hymn is a prayer that we may indeed obey these words: “Breathe on Me, Breath of God”

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ASV	American Standard Version of 1901
AV	Authorized (King James) Version of 1769
NAS	New American Standard version © 1960, 1995 The Lockman Foundation (usually the 1995 edition)
NIV	New International Version © 1984 by the International Bible Society
NLT	New Living Translation © 1996 Tyndale Charitable Trust
NKJV	New King James Version © 1979 Thomas Nelson Inc., Publishers
NRSV	New Revised Standard Version © 1989 National Council of Churches of Christ
WEY	The New Testament in Modern Speech © 1902, 1912 R. F. Weymouth

Some of the commentaries and resources used in the preparation of this message are identified as follow:

Bruce	-	<i>The Gospel & Epistles of John</i> , by F. F. Bruce, William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, Grand Rapids, MI; 1983
BM	-	<i>Biblical Museum</i> , Editor James Comper Gray, ca 1870
NICNT	-	<i>The New International Commentary on the New Testament</i> <i>The Gospel according to John</i> , by Leon Morris
NTC	-	<i>New Testament Commentary</i> , by William Hendriksen; Baker Book House, Grand Rapids, MI; 1954
RWP	-	<i>Robertson’s Word Pictures of the New Testament</i> , by Dr. A. T. Robertson
TTBC	-	Thru the Bible Commentary Series, by J. Vernon McGee; John 11-21; Thomas Nelson Publishers; 1991

2. '*Channels Only*,' by Mary E. Maxwell © 1966 Singspiration
3. William Barclay, '*The Gospel of John*,' quoted in NICNT, *in loc*.