

“The Holy Spirit Whom the World Cannot Receive”

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He Will Give You Another Helper - John 14:16 - 123RF Photo - Used Under License

"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)

This lesson is the fifth and final lesson in the series on "Christians and the World" ([Ref. 1](#), [Ref. 2](#), [Ref. 3](#), [Ref. 4](#)). This lesson describes the role of the Holy Spirit that Jesus promised to give to his disciples who will be living in the world.

Consider. How did the Holy Spirit help the disciples of Jesus in an unfriendly world? How does the Holy Spirit help you?

Let's set the stage. Jesus the Son of God and his disciples had walked together for three years. They had left homes, families, and businesses to follow him. Jesus had led them while he was with them. Jesus had loved them and instructed them. Jesus had sent the twelve and the seventy on training missions to proclaim the kingdom of God and heal the sick (Luke 9:1-2, Luke 10:1-2).

Now it is the last evening before Jesus' crucifixion and death. When the scene unfolds in John chapter 14 Jesus is preparing his disciples for his departure. He has told his disciples that he is about to leave them (John 13:33). Jesus tells them that he is going to the Father's house to prepare a place for them and that he would come again to receive them to himself (John 14:2-3). Jesus knows that he will be leaving the disciples in an unfriendly world. He explains that he will ask the Father, and the Father will give them another Helper to be with them.

"I will ask the Father, and He will give you another Helper." The Greek word for *Helper* in John 14:16 is *paraklétos* (Ref. 5). *Paraklétos* means *one called alongside to help* (Bible Gateway note, Ref. 6). The King James Version translates *paraklétos* as *Comforter* in John 14:16. *Paraklétos* occurs five times in the New Testament, all in the writings of John - John 14:16, John 14:26, John 15:26, John 16:7, and 1 John 2:1. Titles for the Paraclete include Advocate (1 John 2:1), Comforter, Helper, Spirit of Truth (John 14:17, John 16:13) and the Holy Spirit (John 14:26).

The work of the Holy Spirit applied to Jesus' disciples then, to the early church, and to those who believe in and follow Jesus today. The work of the Holy Spirit includes:

1. *Comforting, encouraging, and strengthening us.* Luke the physician wrote about the comfort of the Holy Spirit in the early church. "So the church throughout all Judea and Galilee and Samaria enjoyed peace, being built up; and going on in the fear of the Lord and in the comfort of the Holy Spirit, it continued to increase" (Acts 9:31). The Apostle Paul wrote about the role of the Holy Spirit to the believers at Ephesus (Ephesians 1:1). "For this reason I bow my knees before the Father, from whom every family in heaven and on earth derives its name, that He would grant you, according to the riches of His glory, *to be strengthened with power through His Spirit in*

the inner man ..." (Ephesians 3:14-16, italics added).

2. *Teaching us and guiding us into all the truth.* Jesus told his disciples that the Helper "will teach you all things" (John 14:26). Jesus also said, "When He, the Spirit of Truth, comes, He will guide you into all the truth" (John 16:13). John wrote that the Holy Spirit helps us to discern truth and error (1 John 4:1, 6). For more information about the Spirit of Truth, please refer to the lesson, "Spirit of Truth" (Ref. 7).

3. *Empowering us for service and witness.* Jesus told his disciples before his ascension and departure, "You will receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you; and you shall be My witnesses both in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and even to the remotest part of the earth (Acts 1:8). Jesus also told his disciples that the Holy Spirit would give them words to speak when they encountered arrest and persecution in the hostile world. "When they arrest you and hand you over, do not worry beforehand about what you are to say, but say whatever is given you in that hour; for it is not you who speak, but it is the Holy Spirit" (Mark 13:11).

"That He may be with you forever." Jesus was with his disciples for a few years. He was about to separate from them. He would come to them again in the form of the Paraclete (Holy Spirit), and this spiritual presence would remain with them and future disciples forever (Matthew 28:19-20). For those whose love Christ and keep his commandments, the Holy Spirit is our constant guide, companion, and gift giver, even to the end of the world.

"Whom the world cannot receive." Jesus said, "... the Spirit of truth, whom the world cannot receive, because it does not see Him or know Him ..." (John 14:17). The Greek word for *see* is *theóreo*, which means *to look at, gaze, discern* (Ref. 8). The Greek word for *know* is *ginóskó*, which means *to know through personal experience* (Ref. 9). The world has no eyes with which it can see and no heart to know spiritual things so it cannot receive its (the Holy Spirit's) presence and power (Thayer's Greek Lexicon, Ref. 8). The Apostle Paul wrote, "The person without the Spirit does not accept the things that come from the Spirit of God but considers them foolishness, and cannot understand them because they are discerned only through the Spirit" (1 Corinthians 2:14).

"You know Him because He abides with you and will be in you." God provides the gift of the Holy Spirit to all persons who believe in (trust in, put their faith in) Jesus Christ. Jesus spoke of the future coming of Spirit to believers. "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).

On the day of Pentecost, the Holy Spirit came to fill and empower the disciples of Jesus (Acts 2:1-4). The Apostle Peter provided a Holy Spirit-inspired sermon (Acts 2:14-36). Peter concluded his sermon with this call to action, "Repent, and each of you be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of your sins; and you will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit. *For the promise is for you and your children and for all who are far off, as many as the Lord our God will call to Himself*" (Acts 2:38-39, italics added). God provides the same gift of the Holy Spirit to believers today when we trust in and follow Jesus Christ.

Apply. Jesus said that he would send the Holy Spirit to those who believe in him (John 7:39). Have you received the gift of the Holy Spirit (Acts 2:38-39)? How is the Holy Spirit helping you to live in an unfriendly world?

References

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