

### Exegesis

**Vs. 15** – Jesus moves from the realm of our *prayer life* to the realm of our *love life*. In fact, "love" occurs eight times over the following ten verses.<sup>1</sup> And first, he speaks of how love ought to impact our *conduct*. The Lord says, "If ye love me, keep my commandments." The Lord does not search our feelings to see if we love him; instead, he watches what we do. The hands betray the condition of the heart. While this might seem strange to a Western mind, where love is mainly spoken of as a feeling, to a Jewish mind, love indicates one's devotion and is not really an indication of one's feelings. This is not to say there is no emotion. Read the Psalms; followers of God are very in touch with their feelings. But the difference is that, biblically, our commitment to God's word ought to inform our emotions, not the other way around. In other words, before we ask ourselves, "How do I *feel* about God," we should ask, "What do I *know* about God?" After all, even though Moses said to "love the Lord thy God with all thine heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy might" (Deut. 6:5), he first said, "to keep all his statutes and his commandments" (Deut. 6:2). Should we desire to express our love and affection for Jesus, we will *obey* his commandments (1 Jn. 5:2-3).

"But," you may ask, "what if we desire to express our hate and aversion for Jesus?" Disobey his commandments. Notice that the Lord frames vs. 15 as a *conditional* statement (i.e., if-then) so that *if* we love Jesus, *then* we will do what he says. But, make no mistake, the *opposite* is true: *if* we do not do what he says, *then* we hate Jesus. Those who broke the second commandment were said to "hate" God (cf. Ex. 20:5). And Jesus, speaking about himself, said in John 3:20, "For everyone who does evil hates the light," and he later explains in 7:7 that the world "hates" him because he calls its works "evil." For God, sinful behavior is hateful behavior in the same way that faithful behavior is loving behavior. No matter the case, every act of *defiance* is, first and foremost, an act of *malice* against the Son of God (cf. Ps. 51:4). However much we may protest, when we sin, we are effectively telling God, "I hate you" (cf. Pro. 8:36).

**Vs. 16-17** – Loving Jesus does not come without rewards. He is not some nefarious dictator who demands obedience but never shows any favor. Should we obey his commandments, the Lord says that he "will pray the Father, and he shall give you another Comforter, that he may abide with you forever; even the Spirit of truth; whom the world cannot receive, because it seeth him not, neither knoweth him: but ye know him; for he dwelleth with you, and shall be in

---

<sup>1</sup> Morris (1995), p. 575.

you.”<sup>2</sup> This is yet another advantage for the disciples (cf. vs. 2-3, 12, 14). It would seem the *more* Jesus talks, the *more* his departure is brought into a *more* attractive light. In fact, we're starting to realize that we would've been denied all these advantages had the Lord remained with his disciples. And this is precisely his point. Theoretically, Jesus could've stayed, but his followers would've missed out on so much (cf. 16:7).

**Παράκλητος** (pa-rak'-lay-tos) is the Greek word translated as "Comforter," and it is used four times in John's account (cf. 14:16, 26, 15:26, 16:7). But translating this Greek term isn't as easy as it might appear. In fact, many good bible translations differ on how to translate this term for an English readership: the ASV has "Comforter," but the NKJV, ESV, and NASB all have "Helper," both the NLT and the NIV have "Advocate," and, lastly, the CSB has "Counselor." The issue is further complicated when you realize that the footnotes in some of these translations give additional alternatives. Köstenberger "suggests that any one English rendering may be inadequate..."<sup>3</sup> Thus, in light of this difficulty, it may be time for the church to adopt the term "Paraclete," a transliteration of the original Greek word. However, even this suggestion has its difficulties as many lay readers will more likely be confused by it than helped. Ultimately, wherever one falls on this issue, all can agree that the *core function* of the Holy Spirit is to *aid* the believer. How he does this, specifically, will become apparent later. But, suffice to say, the *foundation* for understanding the Holy Spirit is to acknowledge that he is a "helping presence."<sup>4</sup> The Third Person of the Trinity *helps* us; he is not here to rob us.<sup>5</sup>

Notice, however, that Jesus calls the Holy Spirit "*another* Comforter." In the absence of Jesus' *physical* presence, the *spiritual* presence of the Holy Ghost will fill the void. That is to say, the Holy Spirit takes on some of the responsibilities alongside the Lord (cf. 1 Jn. 2:1; Rom. 8:26). Though, to be clear, just as having the Son is having the Father (cf. 10:27-30), so it is that when the Apostles were given the Holy Spirit, they had Jesus also (cf. 14:18). This is about *addition*, not subtraction.<sup>6</sup> Christ's departure didn't create a deficit regarding his presence. The disciples didn't really lose when he left. If anything, they got *more* of him than they ever had before.

---

<sup>2</sup> Morris (1995), p. 576, this is the first time **ἑρωτάω** (*er-o-tah'-o*) "I will pray" is used about Jesus in John's account. Of the 38 times this term appears in John, five refer to Jesus' prayers: 16:26, 17:9 (2x), 15, 20.

<sup>3</sup> Köstenberger (2008), p. 436.

<sup>4</sup> Köstenberger (2008), p. 434.

<sup>5</sup> A good analogy for this is the scene between Gandalf and Bilbo Baggins in Peter Jackson's *The Fellowship of the Ring*. At one point in the movie, the two characters are arguing, and Gandalf, in a last-ditch effort to save his friend, says, "BILBO BAGGINS....do not take me for some conjuror of cheap tricks! I am not trying to rob you.... I'm trying to help you." Likewise, we often argue with the Holy Spirit. And, in doing so, we forget who he truly is and ignore the fact that he's only trying to help.

<sup>6</sup> Morris (1995), p. 576, the Greek term Jesus uses is **ἄλλον** (*allon*), which means "another of the same kind" (cf. Jn. 5:32, 43), rather than its counterpart, **ἕτερος** (*het'-er-os*), which means "another of a different kind" (cf. Jn. 19:37; Mat. 6:24).

Likewise, anyone who accepts Jesus as their Lord and Savior is, coincidentally, also filled with the Holy Spirit (cf. 7:37-39; Rom. 8:9; 1 Cor. 12:13; Gal. 3:14). This coming of "another Comforter" is as much for us as it was for the Apostles.

Jesus also calls the Holy Ghost the "Spirit of truth." Given that Jesus uses this phrase two other times (cf. 15:26; 16:13), it seems that part of the Spirit's *function* is to "testify" about truth and to "guide [believers] into all truth." And considering that Jesus has just claimed to be the "Truth" incarnate (cf. 14:6), we can safely assume that it is the Holy Spirit's job to confirm Christ and courier us to the Lord. Like a chaperon, the Spirit escorts us through this life toward the Son of God, pointing out Jesus' influence along the way (cf. 4:23-24).

Sadly, the Spirit of Truth is not given to everyone. In fact, Jesus even says, "The world cannot receive [the Spirit], because it seeth him not, neither knoweth him...." What does he mean by this? As we've seen throughout John, the terms "seeth" and "knoweth" are metaphors for faith. Thus, if the world truly saw the Holy Spirit, they would've believed in Jesus Christ, for it is about him that the Spirit of Truth *testifies* (cf. 9:30; 12:40). And if they had truly known the Holy Spirit, they would've put their faith in Jesus Christ for it is to him that the Spirit of Truth *points* (cf. 1:10; 5:39). In not believing the Lord, they've failed to *perceive* the Comforter. And in not putting their faith in the Son of God, they've failed to discern the Paraclete. After all, why would anyone (let alone the Third Person of the Trinity) stick around with someone after they've been ignored in this way?

But the very opposite is said for the believer. After all, Jesus says of the disciples, "ye know him; for he dwelleth with you, and shall be in you." This is the fourth time Jesus has told the apostles that they "know" something (cf. 14:4, 7). And, as before, when Jesus says, "ye know him," he speaks about himself. And it is precisely because the apostles know Jesus that the Holy Spirit "dwelleth" with the believer, a present reality, and "shall be in" the believer, a future certainty.<sup>7</sup> The gift of the Spirit today secures our souls tomorrow (cf. Eph. 4:30). What are we that One such as He would help beings such as us?

---

<sup>7</sup> Morris (1995), p. 577.

## VIDEO DESCRIPTION

### **Deep Dive: The Gospel of John | Week 49 | John 14:15-17**

SPEAKER: Ben Hyrne, Pastor

Jesus has been making his way through various benefits that will come as a direct result of his departure to the Father. Today, we'll explore the *best* of those benefits: *the Holy Spirit*. Sadly, the Third Person of the Trinity is widely misunderstood in church circles. He is considered a mysterious figure whose motives are as unknowable as the wind. What a shame that such an important person of the Godhead is so misconstrued. This was never Christ's intention.

For starters, the Lord explicitly told us the *core function* of the Holy Spirit is to *aid* the believer. He would be "another Comforter" in addition to the one we already have—i.e., Jesus Christ. How the Spirit does this will become apparent later. But, suffice it to say, the *foundation* for understanding the Paraclete is to acknowledge that he is a *helping* presence. In this way, we can read the Spirit's motives better than the wind, for while the wind might blow a storm our way, the Holy Ghost is always trying to *help* us, not *hurt* us.

**Pastor's manuscript can be found here:**

---

#### **Grace Pointe Baptist Church**

12029 Eastern Ave.

Baltimore, MD 21220

**Contact:** [info@GracePointeLife.com](mailto:info@GracePointeLife.com)

**Website:** <https://www.gracepointelife.com>

**Give:** <https://www.gracepointelife.com/give/>

Podcast Details:

Title: The Paraclete

Season 1 | 48