

John 14:15-21 The Promise Given to Troubled Hearts

1. We are now getting into the heart of Jesus' teaching on the person and work of the Holy Spirit. The concept of the Holy Spirit often creates a whole lot of confusion amongst followers of Jesus. Why do you think that is?

Jesus continues to speak to troubled hearts. To troubled hearts he paints a picture of a glorious future using marital imagery (14:2-3). He points to a marriage of heaven and earth – where our world would be shot through with the beauty, love, justice, and peace of God. The disciples are invited to live in anticipation of that future in all that they do and say and pray (14:5-14). They are understandably full of questions, how can we do that without your presence, your power, your work, you showing us the father? This passage is Jesus' answer to those questions.

Read John 14:15-21

2. The passage reads like a set of conditions (a series of if / then statements). This can feel like it is heaping upon us a set of expectations that we could not possibly attain. One of the commentators (D.A. Carson) invites us to see them not as a set of conditions but as a set of essential relations. God's love of us, our love of God, our obedience to his commands are all inter-related. How does this insight fill out your understanding of the life of following Jesus?

This set of essential relations is all held together by a gift, a gift from the father, a gift of another helper (vs. 16). The Holy Spirit is first described here as a "helper". The strict translation of this word "paraclete" which means to "stand and argue alongside". Jesus says that the Spirit is another Helper – that he is the first (See 1 John 2:1-2). Jesus pleads our case before the Father, while the Spirit does that work on our hearts.

3. Jesus first describes the Holy Spirit as the Spirit of Truth. He has just called himself "the truth" (14:6). The Holy Spirit then is to press the truths of who Jesus is and what he has done for us home to our hearts. Can you describe a time where you have experienced yourself of heard from others this work of the Spirit?
4. (vs 16) I will not leave you as orphans. Literally this means I will not leave you without a Father. **Read Romans 8:14-17.** It appears that one of the primary works of the Holy Spirit is to bring home to us the love of God as Father. Why is this so vital to these essential relations? Or put another way - how does knowing the love of the Father shape our love of God and our obedience?
5. (vs. 16-17) How does the fact that the Holy Spirit will dwell with you and never leave you impact your daily life?
6. How do we receive all the benefits of the Holy Spirit in our lives?