

John Ch16v4b-15 - The Gift Of The Spirit

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[0:00] Father, God the Son, and God the Spirit. So, God the Spirit is breathed out by the Father and the Son upon believers.

! But how is that better than having Jesus?! Well, in the original Greek, the word translated advocate here is parakletos.

Unless I go away, the parakletos will not come to you. Now, it's interesting because when you look up this word, parakletos, it has no direct translation into English.

In fact, it takes at least four different words to capture the breadth of its meaning. Advocate, counselor, helper, or comforter.

So, the Spirit is all of these things for those in whom he dwells. As we look at these wonderful aspects throughout this passage, we are going to begin to understand why Jesus would say, it is better for me to go and the Spirit to come.

[1:16] We are going to see that the Spirit is an immeasurably greater gift than even the physical presence of Jesus alongside us.

So, let's begin. And we are going to begin with the word advocate. And we are going to look at verse 8 to 11. We will spend a little bit more time on this one than the others because Jesus gives us a lot of time.

And this is what it says. The Spirit is your advocate convicting the world. Now, an advocate is someone who speaks on your behalf.

You only need an advocate whenever your word is not enough to convince someone, right? Now, as Christians, we've been sent out into the world to speak the message of Christ.

And we talked a lot about that last week. Here's our problem. No one, and I mean no one, wants to hear it. No one wants to be told that they were wrong about Jesus or what it means to be a good person or what comes after this life.

[2:27] How do I know that? Because that was me. And if you're a believer in Christ today, then it was you also at one point. What changed our heart and hearts that did not want to hear the offensive gospel of Jesus?

Here's what changed. Read from verse 8. When he, the advocate comes, he will prove the world to be in the wrong about sin and righteousness and judgment.

So here's the reason why you and I are trusting in Christ today. The Father and Son breathed the Holy Spirit upon us. And for the first time, we came under conviction about sin and righteousness and judgment.

And we were compelled to turn to Christ in repentance. Until the Spirit's conviction, we didn't want to know about Christ. That is how the Spirit regenerates or makes alive those who are spiritually dead.

Now here's the point for us. As we speak the gospel to others, we cannot convince anyone to believe the message about Christ. We can't convince anyone to see that they are a sinner and that they need Jesus.

[3:55] Not a hope. They don't want to hear it. That's why we need an advocate. Someone to speak for us. The Spirit. He will convict people in the world of their sin and need for a Savior.

And here's the thing. He goes with you into the workplace. Into school, into college, into the street or the family. And you can ask him to convict the people around you whose hearts you can't make to see the truth about Jesus.

So here's three things he's going to convict the world about. Have a look in verse 9. About sin. Because people do not believe in me. Now, think about that.

The ultimate sin is the sin of unbelief. Not believing in God's revealed word. Jesus Christ. Despite everything that he said and that he did to prove he was God.

The Spirit opens people's eyes to see that their deepest problems, not just that they've broken God's law, but they've also rejected God's Savior.

[5:08] Here's the second thing the Spirit's going to convict the world about. Verse 10. About righteousness. Because, Jesus says, I am going to the Father where you can see me no longer.

Now, our instinct is always to compare ourselves with others, isn't it? To say, I'm a good person. I mean, I'm not perfect. But, like, I don't break the law.

Or I don't go out of my way to hurt anyone else. Or not as bad as that person on the news over there. We tend to make ourselves the standard of righteousness. Right? The Spirit convicts people that Jesus alone is the standard of righteousness.

He alone lived a right life before God. And his acceptance by the Father into heaven is proof of that. The Spirit convicts people that their own righteousness is as filthy rags.

And that they need the righteousness of Jesus. Okay, that's the second way the Spirit will convict the world. Here's the third way he's going to convict the world.

[6:20] It's verse 11 about judgment. Jesus says, Spirit will convict the world about judgment because the prince of this world now stands condemned.

If you were to ask the average person on the street, do they expect to face God's judgment? What would they say? Probably, no.

I reckon I'm a good enough person. The Spirit exposes this as a lie. Because if Satan, the ruler of this world, is already condemned, so also is everyone who remains under his rule in the kingdom of this world, not in the kingdom of Christ.

The Spirit's conviction leads people to repent and to believe that Jesus died to take our judgment on the cross.

Now, I want to pause there just for a second. Friend here today who is not believing in Christ, maybe you have experienced conviction on these things.

[7:31] Maybe you have begun even today to see that you've been wrong about Jesus. That he really is the perfect son of God. That you are sinful and that you are deserving of God's judgment.

Friend, this is none other than the Holy Spirit's conviction. Don't ignore it. Don't run from it. Don't turn away.

Run to Christ. God. So, we have the first amazing privilege of the Spirit in that he is our advocate as we share the gospel.

He speaks for us, convicting the world when we can't. So we pray. On our way to work. On our way home to the family. On our way to school.

[8:48] We pray and we ask the Spirit to do what we cannot do as we share Jesus with others. But here's the second reason why it's better that Jesus left and sent the Spirit.

He's your counselor. The Spirit is your counselor guiding you into all truth. Now, we ask people for counsel when we don't know what's true or what's right in a situation.

And you usually go to someone that you trust, right? You don't just ask anybody for counsel. And I don't know about you, but that happens an awful lot for me because as limited people in a broken world, we so often don't know what to believe or what to do.

Does Jesus leave us alone in this? No. He sends the Spirit as your counselor guiding you into all truth. Have a look at verse 12.

Jesus says, I have much more to say to you, more than you can now bear. But when he, the Spirit of truth, comes, he will guide you into all truth.

[10:00] He will not speak on his own. He will speak only what he hears and he will tell you what is yet to come. Now, how do we interpret that? How do we apply that? This promise is primarily for the apostles who were there in the room, as Jesus said these words, who were given the task of writing down his teaching and the truth about God in the New Testament.

The Spirit was going to guide them into all that truth. He was going to remind them of Jesus' teaching as they wrote it down. And that's the Bible that we have in our hands right now.

God would even reveal to them what was still to come. Have a look at the book of Revelation for that. But this promise also extends, in a secondary sense, to us, to all believers in every time who are indwelt by the Spirit.

Because the Spirit is our counselor. He is guiding us into all truth. Not by giving us new revelation from God. To say, oh, I have a new word from God.

No. By helping us understand and apply the truth already revealed in his word. Now, our world wonders if objective truth even exists.

[11 : 19] Okay? Truth is treated as something personal. You'll hear things like this. Find your truth. Or whatever is true for you.

Well, the Spirit, he guides us to real, unchanging, objective truth. That you can build your life upon. The truth of all that God is for us in Christ. Now, think about Jesus. In his humanity, he could only be in one place at a time. And that was great, by the way, if you were one of the twelve apostles, right?

They had Jesus' words and counsel and guidance at every turn. But only they did. Jesus had something better in mind. He would send the counselor to indwell every believer forever.

To guide us into all truth. By helping us understand God's word. And apply it to the difficult places in our lives.

[12 : 23] What a gift that is. And if you're a Christian today, you have known the counselor's help in understanding God's word. The Spirit is your counselor. The Spirit is your counselor.

He's not distant. He's never unavailable. He dwells in you. James chapter 1 verse 5 says this. If any of you lacks wisdom, you should ask God, who gives generously to all without finding fault.

Ask God the Spirit to show you the truth that you need to hear from his word. Here's a question for you and for me.

Do we come to church on a Sunday morning expecting the Spirit of truth to speak his truth into our hearts? Do we ask him to do that?

Through the songs, the prayers, the readings, through the sermon? Do you come to your personal time with the Lord each day? Reading the Bible, opening his word.

[13 : 25] Do you come to that time asking the Spirit of truth to speak to you? Expecting him to do so? Do you ask him to help you understand the things that you find difficult to understand in his word?

His answer to your prayer might even be through a brother or sister who will come alongside you and help you understand it. Ask the counselor to guide you more and more into all truth and he will do it.

And here's a third reason why it's better that Jesus left and he sent the Spirit. He's your helper. The Spirit is your helper, revealing Christ's glory.

Now in verse 26 of chapter 15, Jesus said, The Spirit will testify about me. Do you notice in the Bible, if you've read it for a while, you might notice that there's a lot less said about the Holy Spirit than there is about the Father and the Son.

What is that? Is he a lesser member of the Trinity? No. He has a different role. Jesus says, He will testify about me.

[14 : 46] He doesn't draw attention to himself. His role is to testify about Jesus. Read verse 14 again. Jesus says, He, the Spirit, will glorify me because it is from me that he will receive what he will make known to you.

Now one theologian, G.I. Packer, he says this, The Holy Spirit has a floodlight ministry in relation to Jesus Christ. Floodlights help people to see something that couldn't be seen before.

I was with a group of guys in Washington, D.C. back in May. We were taken on a night tour of all the famous landmarks around the city. We arrived at the Lincoln Memorial.

This thing is colossal. There's these 36 massive columns. I'm telling you, higher than that roof.

Nothing remotely like it in Ireland and certainly nothing that this farmer boy from West Cork had ever seen.

You walk up the steps and there you find this 170 ton marble statue of Abraham Lincoln, the former president, who was assassinated because, among many other reasons, he fought to abolish slavery.

[16 : 05] His towering figure was illuminated in the darkness of the building around it. And his words also on the wall behind him.

It was a moving sight. Now in the crowd, no one was there to see the floodlights. No one went home that night saying, Gee, weren't those floodlights brilliant?

No, the floodlights helped us to see the glory of the sight. And that's like the Spirit's role. He does not draw attention to himself, but he shines the light on Jesus.

He is our helper to see Jesus in all his brilliance and glory. The goal of our faith is not just to be a better person or to sin less or even to get to heaven.

The goal of our faith is to know Christ, to behold his glory, to treasure him above everything else. From that, everything else comes in the Christian life.

[17 : 21] The Spirit is the one who helps us to get there. He opens our eyes to see that having Christ is better than all the pleasures of sin or the world.

We were singing about it in the hymn earlier. He takes away our love of sinning. He replaces it with a far superior love.

He gives us new desires, new taste buds for a far superior glory than the false glory that this world will offer us.

I can't open your eyes to see Jesus' glory. You can't even open mine. The Spirit is our helper. He reveals Christ's glory that we would know and treasure him.

Everything else flows from this. So, if you find yourself unsatisfied in the Christian life, wandering back to the stuff you used to do in your old life, it's not that Jesus is lacking in glory or beauty or worth.

[18 : 34] It's that we just can't see how glorious and how satisfying he is. Ask the helper to shine that floodlight on Christ. That you'd see him in all his glory.

He's our helper to see Jesus' glory. There's one last thing, though, that we see in this passage. One more reason why it's better that Jesus went away and sent his Spirit.

He's your comforter. The Spirit is your comforter sharing all that is Christ's with you. And I think this is potentially the most remarkable.

Jonathan was already talking earlier about how we need comfort. We all need comfort. There's times when we just feel down and out. And all the places that we go for comfort never 100% cut it. Real comfort comes when we are reminded who we are and how we're truly loved. Have a look at how the Spirit does this for us.

[19 : 47] In verse 14, it says, He, the Spirit, will glorify me because it is from me that he will receive what he will make known to you.

And Jesus says exactly the same thing again, the next verse. The Spirit's going to take what is Christ's and make it yours.

As one writer beautifully puts it, The Spirit takes all that is the Son's and makes it ours.

Not just a head knowledge, an experiential knowledge of all that belongs to Christ. And it happens through our union with Jesus.

Everything that he has, the Spirit gives to us. It is beyond remarkable. Just to think about it.

[20 : 52] Think about this aspect of that reality. Jesus has known the Father's perfect love for eternity. Okay? Before he ever created the world, what was God doing?

God the Father was loving the Son through the Spirit. God the Son was delighting in his Father through the Spirit. And now, Father and Son send the Spirit so we can share in that same relationship.

Isn't that amazing? Adopted as sons and daughters of the Father. Enjoying that same intimacy that Christ has experienced with the Father for eternity.

What a wonder that is. The Spirit takes that relationship and makes it ours. It's not just a head knowledge, like, yeah, I know theoretically I'm a child of God.

No, a real, day-to-day, experiential knowledge. God wants you to feel like his child and live like his child.

[22 : 12] Listen to how Paul says it in Romans chapter 8. For those who are led by the Spirit of God are the children of God. Okay, that's the truth, that's the fact.

Hear the experience. The Spirit you received does not make you slaves so that you live in fear again. Rather, the Spirit you received brought about your adoption to sonship and by him we cry, Abba, Father.

The Spirit himself testifies with our spirit that we are God's children. The Comforter's ministry is to assure us that we belong to the Father.

He testifies with our spirits that we really are God's children. We find this cry coming from deep within us.

Abba, Father, where we never thought of God as our Father before. That's the Spirit's work. Every time we fear it's too good to be true or we fear that we've sinned our way out of his love, the Spirit says you are chosen.

[23:38] You are adopted. You are loved. You belong to the Father. You have been caught up into this divine life.

You are now a partaker in the fellowship of the Father and Son and Spirit. Jesus says, my Comforter when I was on earth is now your Comforter.

My Advocate is now your Advocate. My Counselor is your Counselor. My Helper is now your Helper.

the Spirit shares all that is Christ's with you and with me. So take comfort.

I don't know which one of these most stands out to you. They are staggering. Each one individually.

[24:46] I think Jesus has done more than enough to prove to us that it really is better that he left and that the Spirit came. I pray that in some way today we each would just grasp the astonishing privilege that this is to be indwelt by God the Spirit.

Paul talks in Thessalonians about not quenching the Spirit's work in our lives. We can live in a way that practically ignores the Spirit.

We can be ignorant of his work as our Advocate. our Counselor our Helper our Comforter.

The call today is for us to enjoy the Spirit's work in our lives. Not to ignore it but to really press into it. To be open to it. To ask him for it.

We can talk to the Spirit. We can ask him to help us to speak for us as we go and evangelize those around us. To guide us into all truth as we read the Word.

[26:04] To help us to see Christ's glory. And to remind us of who we are in him whenever we doubt it. May we press in to everything that the Spirit wants to do in us and for us.

let's pray. Amen. Father, we thank you.

We thank you for the gift of the Spirit in our lives. We thank you for breathing him out upon us. And this is a gift we cannot even begin to understand how great it is.

Jesus, we are sorry for the times that we doubt you and we doubt your Word. And sometimes we think it would be much better if you were just here with us physically.

And yet you have said today, it is better that you went away. And that you sent your Spirit to dwell in every believer. And thank you for how you've taught us about that.

[27:29] Teach us, Spirit, how wonderful a gift this is. Help us not to ignore you in our lives, but to walk with you each day into everything that you have for us.

Thank you that you are shining the light on Christ in our lives day to day. Oh, that we would glory in him and be satisfied in him.

In Jesus' name we pray all of these things. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen.