

The coming of the Comforter

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[0:00] Thank you very much. So please turn to John chapter 14. This is carrying on from last week and we'll carry on a little bit further this evening. We were looking at the subject of what happens when Jesus goes away. And I quoted Ben and Jerry's ice cream. And in case you weren't sure what Ben and Jerry's ice cream looks like, there's actually a picture of Ben and Jerry's ice cream there.

And I asked if anybody knew who Ben or Jerry were. And Adam knew last time. Does anybody here know who Ben and Jerry are? No. Okay. Yes. Good. Are they nice people?

They're American businessmen. That's probably all we need to know, is it? Okay. Because it struck me that the taste of the ice cream is really the thing that matters.

And if Ben and Jerry are dead and gone, it doesn't make any real difference. If Ben and Jerry never existed, it probably doesn't make any difference as long as the ice cream tastes okay.

Does it matter if they existed? I think not. And there are some brands where it doesn't exist. So Mr. Kipling, who makes the cakes, does he exist? I think not. I'm sorry to disappoint you if you thought that he did.

[1:21] And you can see I prepared this last week before I realized who was in the audience today. So could you be, for example, a fully paid up Anglican, whether or not Jesus existed?

So some of our politicians have put on their CV, they're Anglicans. Does that mean that they go on a Sunday morning, they sit down, say something, stand up, sit down again, stand up, do all of that, go home, done all that?

And could do that whether or not Jesus existed, whether or not Jesus is there? I put, say Anglican, Baptist, Presbyterian, whatever.

But is it possible to be a Christian in the real sense, whether or not Jesus is a real person, whether or not he existed, no matter what sort of person he is or was?

And what I was trying to persuade people of last week was that Christianity is so much connected to the person of Jesus that without Jesus, Christianity is impossible.

[2:43] Unlike Ben and Jerry's ice cream, if you see what I mean. And we were looking in John chapter 14 at the whole question of the disciples faced with the issue that Jesus would go away and not be there any longer.

And how could they carry on being Christians? If you have your Bible there, please notice John chapter 14, verse 2. Jesus says, I am going.

And in verse 3, he says, if I go. And in verse 5, he says, you are going.

Lord, we don't know where you are going. And in verse 12, it says, I am going. And in chapter 16, verse 5, he says, now I am going.

None of you asked me, where are you going? Well, actually, they do. But Jesus obviously means something different. So the question that we were looking at is, how is the Christian life possible?

[3:49] How could it be possible for these people if Jesus had gone away? If there was no more Jesus? That's what we were looking at. And I said that in this long talk, Jesus gives an explanation of how the Christian life can carry on if he is not physically there.

And it was like a cord with several strands. And I picked out four of the strands. Prayer. Faith in the words of Jesus.

The personal presence and ministry of the comforter or the counselor, the Holy Spirit. And fourthly, living in loving obedience to Jesus.

And we just picked out those things a little bit last time. But this time, I want to focus on the third one. The personal presence and ministry of the comforter.

So those are the four strands. And today, the counselor, the comforter, the Holy Spirit. And I'm going to ask four questions. The first question. What do we lack if Jesus has gone away and there is no person to replace him?

[5:07] Who or what brings the blessings that Jesus talks about? What is or are the blessings that he promises? And fourthly, how can I have these or this blessing?

Okay, four questions. What's the need? Who or what brings? What is brought? And how can I have it? So let's look, first of all, at the need or the lack in the absence of Jesus.

So we could ask, what did Jesus mean to the disciples while he was physically present? What did he bring to them?

What did he bring to the peace that would be missed if he wasn't there? So John 4.42, for example, shows Jesus as being a master evangelist.

In John 4.42, if you've got a Bible, you might like to look at it. Just to make sure I'm not cheating you. These are the Samaritan villagers and they say, we no longer believe just because of what you have said.

[6:15] We have heard for ourselves. We know this man really is the savior of the world. So for them, it wasn't the testimony of the woman, but actually hearing from Jesus himself.

Yes, he was the great evangelist. And of course, if he's not there, how will anybody ever become a Christian in the future?

It was the words from his lips that clinched it. But then, probably on a broader tack, for the disciples, Christianity was their relationship with Jesus himself.

So if you look at John chapter 1, just as an example, he is introduced to the disciples as, for example, he is, verse 29, the Lamb of God.

He is, verse 33, the one who baptizes with the Holy Spirit. He is, verse 41, the Messiah, the Christ.

[7:26] He is the teacher, verse 38. He is, according to John chapter 1 and what's said there, he's the person that the Bible is all about.

What is this big book about, the Old Testament and the New Testament, written over long centuries of time? What is it about? And Philip told Nathanael and said, we found the one Moses wrote about in the law and about whom the prophets also wrote, Jesus of Nazareth, the son of Joseph.

It's all about Jesus. He's all these things. And it's him who is these things. It's not saying he leaves us a code or a philosophy or a culture.

It's him. And if it isn't him, there's nothing left. We could go on all the way through John's Gospel, picking out the things that focus on Jesus himself.

Chapter 5, he is the judge. All judgment is committed to Jesus. Chapter 6, he says, I am the living bread.

[8:44] If you eat me, you don't die. In chapter 7, verse 37, he says, I give. It doesn't say I am, but he says, I give living water.

And if you are dried up and dead, he is the one who gives life. He says it in chapter 37.

On the last and greatest day of the feast, Jesus stood up and said, if anyone is thirsty, let him come to me and drink. Now, Jesus doesn't say, I can give you a technique.

I can give you a commodity. He says, you come to me. I'm the one. And if there's no Jesus, if he's gone away, if he's absent, it's all lost.

Jesus says, I am the good shepherd. When he speaks to Martha in John chapter 11, she says, I know that there's going to be a resurrection.

[10:02] I know that God has a time scale and there will be a resurrection and people will rise again on the last day. And Jesus says to her, very remarkably, chapter 11, 25, I am the resurrection.

I am that. I am that. And in the passage that we quoted right at the beginning, Jesus says, I am the way, the truth and the life.

So, multiple texts, multiple truths say, if you take away Jesus, what have you got left?

You know, you've got nothing, have you? Christianity without Christ is impossible because it's about him.

And yet we're faced with the question that Jesus says, I won't be there. I'm going away. He says that to his disciples. I'm going away. And what makes it possible for them to live the Christian life or the Christian kingdom to progress when Jesus is gone?

[11:26] So, that's what we're going to be looking at. That was the introduction. John 14 is now where we're at. So, look at, for example, verse 15, where Jesus says, if you love me, you will obey what I command.

And I will ask the Father and he will give you another counselor to be with you or to abide with you forever. The spirit of truth.

The world cannot accept him. The world cannot accept him because it neither sees him nor knows him. So, Jesus says there will be a way to live the Christian life when I'm gone.

And as key to this is this provision. I will give you another counselor.

And that's what we're going to look at. So, who or what brings the blessings that make the Christian life possible when Jesus isn't here?

[12:38] So, he refers to this counselor. The word in Greek is parakletos.

And it means something like somebody who comes alongside you. And Jesus says, up to this point, you've depended on me being there.

I'm going away. But somebody else will come and be alongside you. He's called that in the verses referred to.

But it's particularly there in verse 16 where we'll stick with that. What sort of, how should we think of this unseen person who comes alongside?

What in our experience will be somebody who comes alongside us? So, I thought of some examples. I thought of a life coach. Is anybody here a life coach? Good.

[13:44] Right. Okay. I can make unfettered remarks about life coaches. I know somebody who was a life coach. And it rather surprises me that anybody has the nerve to tell anybody else how to live their lives.

But anyway. But I suppose what this person did, he got alongside. There's actually a young lady. And he helped her plan her life. He helped her and encouraged her. I think she was going to run a marathon or some marathons. And this life coach said, yes, you can do this.

And she said, oh, I don't think I can. She said, yes, you can. Oh, I don't think I can. Yes, you can.

And he got alongside her and encouraged her like that. I thought also of a rowing coach.

Now, when we go and visit my daughter and son-in-law in Oxford, we go for a little walk alongside the canal. And as you're walking alongside the canal, it's very pleasant down there.

[14:44] They don't have the sea like we have. But we have, no, I shouldn't say canal. I should say the river. Yeah. It turns into canals at some point. But anyway, along there.

And one of the hazards of walking along there is that you see a rowing boat go past you like this.

And you have to jump out of the way because a cyclist is following the boat.

And you have to jump past. And the cyclist is saying, faster. Left a little bit. Faster. Like this.

And this is the rowing coach who's encouraging those people. And I think maybe we should think in those terms of somebody who comes alongside and supports and helps like that.

And another thought might be a legal representative. So I went to a licensing hearing earlier in the week. And I won't tell you all the details of it. But the person who was putting in the application was trembling like a leaf.

[15:48] But he had an advocate with him. He had somebody, a legal representative, who knew exactly what was what. And when the person themselves didn't quite know what to say, the advocate came in and said, I think what my client is trying to say is this, this, this, this, and this.

I think this is the way he wants to go with this. And the idea of having somebody alongside us.

Jesus says, I did all those things when I was with you.

But now I'm gone. I'm sending another counselor, comforter, advocate to be with you forever.

And of course, one of the issues about the Holy Spirit is, is the Holy Spirit a person or a thing? So a thing like gravity, electricity, water.

Sometimes the Holy Spirit is spoken of as water. Wind is a thing. Sometimes the Holy Spirit is spoken of as wind. But to have somebody alongside you who says, you're doing well, keep it up. [16:55] Something like, it's a person, isn't it? Who brings these blessings? So he's called the counselor.

He's also called, verse 17, the spirit of truth. Please notice he's referred in that way. Chapter 14, verse 17, the spirit of truth.

Chapter 15, verse 26. When the counselor comes, whom I will send to you from the Father, the spirit of truth. And 16:13.

When he, the spirit of truth, comes, he will guide you into all truth. So that's the second name for this person that Jesus sends.

And some of you might be reading that and thinking, oh, well, John must have got that wrong. Because you might be thinking the Holy Spirit is not to do with truth, but to do with feelings, emotion, excitement.

[18:05] And Jesus should have said, the spirit of excitement comes. Or the spirit of emotion comes. But he did actually say, the spirit of truth.

And he said it three times. And that means that we have to think carefully what he's saying. Who has he sent to us? The spirit of truth.

And we look at the connections that he makes. The spirit of truth, verse 26, will teach you all things. He's a teaching spirit. Chapter 15, verse 26. The counselor comes. He will testify about me. He will tell truth about me.

Chapter 16, verse 13. The spirit of truth comes. He will guide you into all truth. I must say that surprised me. But it's repeated several times.

[19:05] What does the spirit do when he comes? He brings the real truth about who Jesus is.

Who is he? He's the son of God. What did he do? He died on the cross to pay the penalty for our sins. What does he promise? He's coming again as judge and saviour.

These things are true. And the Holy Spirit brings these truths. And that's one of the great ministries that he does. It's said of the Holy Spirit in 1 Corinthians 2, 10.

That he searches the deep things of God and makes them known. And here, I think Jesus is tapping into that thought. That the thing that the Holy Spirit does is bring the truth and convince us of it.

Convince people who don't believe it that that's true. And this is his work. And in particular, it says in chapter 16, verse 15.

[20:10] All that belongs to the Father is mine. That is why I said the Spirit will take from what is mine and make it known to you. And a particular ministry then of the Spirit. To take the deep things about Jesus and make them known to us.

It seems to me a remarkable insight into the work of the Spirit. What's the problem in the world today? People don't see who Jesus is. What's the solution? The work of the Holy Spirit.

What's the problem with Christians? They don't believe what God said. What's the work of the Holy Spirit? To convince us of the truth about God and Jesus and salvation and faith.

Who or what brings these blessings? Answer, the Counselor. The Holy Spirit. The Spirit of Truth. And I put a third name for this person who comes.

And what I've put is that he's called the Son and, in effect, the Father. And you'll think, he really has gone crazy this morning.

[21:23] Let me try and explain this. Please look at the text. Chapter 14, verse 16. Jesus says, I will ask the Father and he will give you another counselor to be or to abide with you forever.

The Spirit of Truth. So, Jesus sends this person. The Spirit of Truth. But then, in almost the same breath, Jesus says, verse 18, I will not leave you as orphans.

I will come to you. He's talking about the same thing. When the Spirit comes, it's just as if Jesus comes.

And in verse 23, again, talking about the same thing. If anyone loves me, he will obey my teaching. My Father will love him. And we will come to him and make our home with him.

We, the Father will come. The Son will come. And abide. Same idea. To make our home with this person.

[22:38] So, here's a remarkable thing. It's just in a few verses. It's said quite quickly. But it is a remarkable thing. When the Holy Spirit comes, the Son comes, the Father comes.

And we have to think of the theology of this. John spends a long time showing to us that if you've seen the Son, you've seen the Father.

Jesus says that himself. I am the exact representation of the Father. There's nothing about the Father you don't see in Jesus. There's nothing in Jesus that isn't an exact representation of the Father.

They're that close. And he's now going on to say, when the Spirit comes, that's the exact representation of the Father and the Son. You can't tell the difference.

It's just as if the Father has come into your life. It's just as if the Son has come into your life. And why is that? Because the Spirit has come into your life. And he is just like the Father and just like the Son.

[23:41] And again, this isn't a thing. You can't do that with a thing. So, I expect most of you are familiar with the idea of a television. No? No?

Does anybody here have a television? Okay, just you and me, Richie. So, this is for you and me, then. In your front room, you could imagine, if you haven't got a television, you could imagine somebody who has a television.

And on the television is, which is the Richard Attenborough that didn't make the film? It's Richard Attenborough, isn't it? That's the one, isn't it? And the gorilla goes slowly up. David Attenborough. Right, that one. I needed your help on this. That one, David Attenborough. Is it? Right, okay. And if you go into the front room, and the gorilla goes slowly up to the tree.

I've got David Attenborough in my front room. I've got David Attenborough in my front room. And somebody comes in and says, no, it's not David Attenborough. It's just a picture of him. It's just a two-dimensional picture.

[24:47] The colours are a bit similar. The noise sounds similar. But it's not really him. You know, you can walk around behind and you just see the black of the back of the television. It's not really him. It's just as a representation of him.

You need a person to bring another person. So Katie here has a twin called Mitch. And they're very, very similar.

And at first sight, if Mitch was here, you might well be tempted to go up to her and say, hello, Katie. How are you today? Because they are that close.

A person. You wouldn't have been deceived by a television, but you might be deceived by another person. And is Irene here today? No.

Well, the other day I saw her sister, who is Marcella. And I thought it was Irene. And I said, you've had your hair done, haven't you? A person can be so like another person that you mistake which one's which.

[25:54] And what is being said here is that when the Holy Spirit comes, he is so much like the Son and the Father. It's like the Son and the Father have come. So what are the blessings promised?

Let's go, let's look at the text asking this question. So when the Holy Spirit comes, verse 18, Jesus says, I will not leave you as orphans.

I will come to you. And he also says in verse 16, I will give you another counselor to be, that's, the word is abide, with you forever.

Now notice those. Not orphans and not an on-off thing. Okay, some people we know are a bit on-off. You see them and then you don't see them for years and there's a big gap.

And with the Holy Spirit, there isn't a big gap. He abides with his people forever. So not that. Not orphans. Wouldn't it be awful if we lived the Christian life feeling that we were orphans?

[27:10] That Jesus had gone away. We have no heavenly Father. We're left on our own. No one's looking out for us. No one's with us.

And without the Holy Spirit, you might well imagine that would be what Christianity was like. But God, Jesus says, I won't leave you as orphans.

I won't leave you feeling you've got no heavenly Father, no one caring for you, no one looking for you. The Holy Spirit does the opposite of that.

The Holy Spirit makes you know, I am not an orphan. I have a heavenly Father. I can call on him as Father.

I can say, our Father who is in heaven. And there's somebody there saying, Amen. I'm listening to that. I will not leave you as orphans. And of course, that's the theology that Paul picks up on big time when he does his stuff in Romans.

[28:15] And let me quote you the sort of thing he says. He says, We have the spirit of sonship by which we cry, Abba, Father.

The Spirit himself testifies with our spirit that we are God's children. Here's a precious thing. To have an instinct. And every Christian has this.

To have that instinct that when I pray, I say, Heavenly Father, and he is my heavenly Father. I'm not an orphan. One of the highest blessings in the Christian life, to know that we're part of God's family. Not orphans. Not lifeless and dead. I'm just picking up now on verse 19. Because I live, you also will live.

So if you wanted to know what lifeless and dead looks like in John's gospel, it's like that, like camel bones in the desert. When Jesus says, If you're thirsty, he means this.

[29:22] Dead, dried up, dying, no life. That's what people are like without God. And he says, You won't be dead and dried up and lifeless.

Because I live, you also will live. And I'd like to just sort of wonder whether we could link that with all the things in John's gospel about living water.

If you're thirsty, come to me and drink. The woman at the well, you remember, she was getting water. That was the exact time that Jesus spoke to her. If you had known who I was, Jesus said, you would have asked me and I would have given you living water.

And the Holy Spirit is the water, if you like, that means that we're no longer lifeless and dead. And also, not blind and ignorant.

It's interesting that in this long talk that is recorded for us that we're just delving into in these Sundays, people ask a lot of questions.

[30:29] And it looks like they really don't know what the answers are. So, Philip says, Show us the Father. And Jesus says, Why do you ask that? You already know the answer to that. And Thomas says, We don't know the way you're going.

And Jesus says, Well, yes, you do. And all sorts of questions. And they don't know. They're puzzled. They can't see.

They don't know. And Jesus says, When the Holy Spirit comes, that won't be the case anymore. The Spirit will give you a sort of conviction.

A simple conviction. This is not something I'm guessing at. This is something I know. So he says, So in answer to Judas Iscariot's question, No, not that one.

Let me just see where I am. Like in verse 17, he talks about the coming of the Spirit. And he says, Just notice the wording of this. The world cannot accept him because it neither sees him nor knows him.

[31:34] The world cannot see this spiritual realm and does not know. But you are not like that. And if you look through, I'll just point out one or two of these examples.

Jesus says, When the Spirit comes, you will know. You will see. You will have certainty. You won't be guessing. You won't be left in the dark.

Let me just give you some examples of this. Verse 17. The Spirit, The world cannot accept him. It neither sees him nor knows him. But you know him.

You know him. And verse 19. It says, Before long, the world will not see me any longer, but you will see me. You will see. You will know. And verse 20.

It says, On that day, you will, a better translation, know that I am in my Father and my Father is in me and you are in me and I am in you.

[32:36] You will know these things. If you were a Christian, would you agree that this is how it is? That before, you just were all over the place.

But when you became a Christian, things suddenly became so clear. You say, I know this. I can see this. Faith is strengthened to take on the character of certainty and boldness and assurance. It's the work of the Holy Spirit. And you will not be unloved. So this is linking up with the whole theme of love.

Verse 21. Whoever has my commands and obeys them, he is the one who loves me. He who loves me will be loved by my Father and I too will love him and show myself to him.

The showing myself is the Holy Spirit work. He says, he says, this is, this is, these things all sort of woven together, but I will bring love to you.

[33:47] When the Holy Spirit comes, I show myself, says Jesus, and I show you my love. There's actually quite a lot in there about the love that the believers have in connection with the Holy Spirit.

And again, that's a big theme that Paul will take up when he does Romans. And he says two things about that. Remember two memorable things?

God demonstrates his love for us in this. While we were still sinners, Christ died for us. There's a truth about Jesus. And then he, in another sentence nearby, he says, God pours his love into our hearts by the Holy Spirit whom he has given us.

And you've got a truth and you've got a sort of personalized application of it. Those things go together. The work of the Holy Spirit. Do you not think this is a brilliant blessing?

I know it's a warm day. I know it's long. And I know some of you are thinking, I'm not really familiar with what's going on here, but just stop for a minute. Do you not think these are brilliant blessings?

[34:56] That we're not orphans because the Holy Spirit comes to us. We're not lifeless and dead because the Spirit brings the life of Jesus to us. We're not blind and ignorant.

We know. We don't know everything. We don't see everything. But we can see some things with complete clarity. And we're not unloved. The Spirit brings to us a sense of belonging to the love of the Father.

But the fourth question was this. How can I have this blessing? I think this is a blessing worth having. I think if you get the idea of it, you'd say, I'd like some of that. I'd like some of that.

Well, what a way to go through life knowing that you're loved by God. Knowing you have some sort of certainty about things. How do I get that? Well, let me give you a couple of wrong answers.

So one wrong answer is just by being spiritual. And you might think, Holy Spirit, spiritual? Well, yoga's spiritual.

[35:55] Some forms of yoga are spiritual. Buddhism, spiritual. Hinduism, spiritual. They're all, that's all the Holy Spirit, isn't it? It's all the same thing, isn't it? And I'm going to say that's a wrong answer because not every spirit is the Holy Spirit.

Not always are Jesus. Remember Jesus saying, no one comes to the Father except through me. He didn't say, there's lots of ways. He said that in one way.

And not all truths that are claimed are true. The Spirit brings the truth. And that's actually a very specific thing. So wrong answer by being spiritual.

And Jesus says that the world cannot receive. Here's a second answer that's wrong. So the second answer goes along the line that only specialist Christians receive the Holy Spirit.

So ordinary Christians don't but specialist Christians do. So that would be sort of the background of the idea of Pentecostalism or some charismatic people might push it in that direction and some wouldn't.

[36:59] But that's not right. He doesn't say you need a special prayer or a second experience or an unusual emotion.

He doesn't say that. The text does not say that. What does it say? It says the Spirit comes by the prayer of the crucified Son and the gift of the Father.

And Jesus says this several times over. Look at verse 16. I will ask the Father and He will give you another counselor to be with you forever.

Now there's some complex Trinitarian theology going on there but what it actually says is Jesus says I will ask the Father will send and the Father sends the Holy Spirit.

Notice that Jesus puts it in the future. He doesn't say I'm asking now. He says I will ask and the reason why He puts it in the future is He hasn't yet died on the cross and risen from the dead. When I've died on the cross and risen from the dead then I will ask the Father and He will send the Holy Spirit.

[38:12] It's there in verse 25. All this I have spoken while still with you but the counsel of the Holy Spirit whom the Father will send in my name.

So the Father sends in the name of Jesus. In 1526 there's some more Trinitarian theology. verse 1526 when the counselor comes whom I will send to you from the Father the Spirit of truth who goes out from the Father. So I'm not going to go into the complexities of it but there's a lot of subtle stuff in there.

Where does the Spirit come from? From the prayer of the crucified Son and the gift of the Father. that's really Christianity.

Before that we're Old Testament. Now this is New Testament. What's New Testament? It's when Jesus has died on the cross gone to heaven and He gives the Holy Spirit to His church that His people have the blessings that we've just looked at before.

[39:23] It's a free gift purchased at great cost. Jesus died on the cross that the blessing promised to Abraham might come to the Gentiles through faith that we would receive the Holy Spirit.

We have an enormous privilege and it was bought for us by the death of our Savior. That's one answer. Now there's a second answer.

How can I have this blessing? So the first answer says go and ask Jesus. The first answer says if you want this life go to Jesus because He's the one who gives it.

You can't get this by standing up at the right time sitting up at the right time or anything like that.

You need personally to go to Jesus. I want that life. And the second answer is that Jesus says I give this blessing to people who are responsive appreciative Christians.

So notice what He says in verse 15. If you love me you will obey what I command and I will ask the Father and He will give you another counselor to be with you forever.

[40:43] I don't give this to just everybody. I don't give this to the world says Jesus. I give this to my people. And how can you define my people? Because they listen to me.

They do what I say. That's what a Christian is. Somebody who builds his house on the rock who hears the words of Jesus and says I want to put that into practice.

And it's to those people that Jesus gives the Holy Spirit. Now some people think that you could be a Christian in name only. So you don't really listen to what Jesus says.

You don't really care what Jesus says. You don't really do anything that Jesus says. That is in name only. Nominal is the word for that. And nominal Christianity is not the sort of Christianity that Jesus gives the Holy Spirit to.

And some Christians are rude and disobedient. So they say I'm a Christian but I'm just jolly well going to live my life the way I want to live it. and it would be no surprise that Jesus says either does not give the Holy Spirit to those Christians or in a sense withdraws the Holy Spirit from those Christians.

[41:55] Some Christians are forgetful. They came to the Lord and then they've wandered off and forgotten and they say well I don't sense any of the work of the Holy Spirit in my life and you'd say well that's what it says in the Bible.

The work of the Spirit is for those who love Jesus and obey him. If you might like to say he gives his intimate presence to those who are prepared to be intimate with himself.

For those who obey his teaching or if you want to put it in a very simple form for people who put Jesus first. And for Christians who are not prepared or say they're Christians but not prepared to put Jesus first this whole thing becomes a complete mystery and they say Christianity doesn't work for me.

Well it doesn't work for you because you're not putting Jesus first. it's very simple but that's a very big thing. I hope you've thought about that.

You're here in a Christian assembly and I presume that's because you're either saying you're a Christian or interested in becoming a Christian and the sort of Christianity that Jesus is referring to all the way through here is when people put Jesus first.

[43:21] Absolutely. He's not saying you can have Christianity as a hobby or a thing that you put on your CV. It is everything or it's nothing.

He is absolutely Lord of all or he's not Lord at all. This is for people who put Jesus first. Holy Spirit Christianity is the only sort of Christianity that Jesus had in mind.

Would you say you have no Holy Spirit in your life? Perhaps you're still one of the people in the world that Jesus says you cannot know, you cannot see. Believe is what I'd say to you.

Put your trust in Jesus. Come to him in faith. Would you say that you're trying to live the Christian life but there's no blessing there?

And then I would say, well is that because you've become forgetful and negligent and spiritually lazy and spiritually independent or plain disobedient?

[44:31] And if you do that, the Christian life will seem unreal. You can't live the Christian life if you're walking in the opposite direction to Jesus. Jesus, he did say, obey what I command.

But Christian, you're not perfect. You sin, you fall, you come back to the blood of Jesus Christ but in your heart you want to follow him and you're praying, Lord help me to follow you today.

I'm trusting in your promises, I want to live according to your word and I want to say, if that's how you're living the Christian life, you're not an orphan. you're not bereft.

You have a heavenly father, you're his precious child. The father and the son come to you. Well, maybe sometimes you're not conscious of that but that's the truth, you're indwelt by God and he promises that perhaps at various times and in various degrees but nevertheless he promises I will love you, I will show myself to you.

that's the Christian life and I ask, is anybody up for that? Let's close by singing. Thank you.