

The Living Water

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Please consider donating to this work in the San Francisco Bay Area online at ChristchurchEastBay.org. Good morning, Christchurch.

My name is Suzy Shin, and I'm part of the Friday Oakland Family Community Group. I'll be reading today's scripture lesson from the book of John, chapter 7, verses 37 through 39, and chapter 14, verses 15 through 27.

A reading from the gospel according to John. On the last and greatest day of the festival, Jesus stood and said in a loud voice, Let anyone who is thirsty come to me and drink.

Whoever believes in me, as scripture has said, rivers of living water will flow from within them. By this he meant the Spirit, whom those who believed in him were later to receive.

[1 : 09] Up to that time the Spirit had not been given, since Jesus had not yet been glorified. If you love me, keep my commands. And I will ask the Father, and he will give you another advocate to help you and be with you forever, the Spirit of truth.

The world cannot accept him, because it neither sees him nor knows him. But you know him, for he lives with you and will be in you. I will not leave you as orphans. I will come to you.

Before long the world will not see me anymore, but you will see me. Because I live, you also will live. On that day you will realize that I am in my Father, and you are in me, and I am in you.

Whoever has my commands and keeps them is the one who loves me. The one who loves me will be loved by my Father, and I too will love them and show myself to them. Then Judas, not Judas Iscariot, said, But Lord, why do you intend to show yourself to us and not to the world?

Jesus replied, Anyone who loves me will obey my teaching. My Father will love them, and we will come to them and make our home with them. Anyone who does not love me will not obey my teaching.

[2 : 18] These words you hear are not my own. They belong to the Father who sent me. All this I have spoken while still with you. But the Advocate, the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in my name, will teach you all things, and will remind you of everything I have said to you.

Peace I leave with you. My peace I give you. I do not give to you as the world gives. Do not let your hearts be troubled, and do not be afraid. This is the Gospel of the Lord.

Praise to you, Lord Christ. Good morning, Christ Church. First things first, happy birthday to Sebastian Juan and Walter St. Clair. We had the privilege of having a bunch of the youth group boys and mentors over last night around the fire pit.

Walter is now 13 years old. And that means that we have three teenagers living under one roof at our house for the next six months until my daughter goes away to college in August.

And so we would just ask your prayers. That's way too much teenage energy and angst, and way beyond what Catherine and I can handle. So I'd love to also ask your prayers.

[3 : 26] I'm going out for the next two weeks on a trip to be with my annual pastors gathering, and then to go recruiting to two seminaries. We'd just love your prayers for God to lead me to the right people, right conversations to fill the positions we want to fill for ministry here in the Bay Area.

And, yeah, we really appreciate your prayers for that. If you were with us on Ash Wednesday, we kick-started the season of Lent. And we began exploring this portion of the gospel, the gospel of John chapters 14, 15, 16, and 17, which is called the Upper Room Discourse.

And this is the night before Jesus is going to the cross. And so knowing what's at stake, he's not talking with his disciples about the weather or about sports.

He's not talking with them about politics or about the stock market. He's talking with them about subjects that are most crucial for their life with God.

And Jesus is equipping and empowering his disciples to receive the gift of the Holy Spirit. He knows that he's sending them out on this heroic journey, right, this heroic mission beyond his crucifixion, beyond his resurrection.

[4 : 45] And he knows they need the gift of empowerment. Some of you are Lord of the Rings fans. And so if you remember to Lothlorien, where Galadriel gives each member of the Fellowship of the Rings gifts that are going to provide them comfort, provide them the help that they're going to need on their heroic journey, their heroic quest.

And without Galadriel's gifts, they would have been absolutely doomed to failure, right? Can you imagine no lembas bread, no elven ropes?

Come on, people. No Lothlorien cloaks, no file of Galadriel. They would have been swallowed up by the darkness. And in the same way, Jesus is equipping and empowering his disciples for what it's going to mean to receive the gift of the Holy Spirit.

Now, there's a great deal of ignorance and a great deal of confusion about the Holy Spirit today. I've heard the Nicene Creed paraphrased this way. We believe in God the Father.

We believe in his Son, Jesus Christ. But we are not so sure about the Holy Spirit. And because the person and work of the Holy Spirit is so neglected, so ignored, so glossed over, it's just a strange thing.

[6 : 04] It's because of all the gifts that Jesus gives, the Holy Spirit is the greatest of his gifts. It's impossible to even become a Christian, let alone to live and to grow as a Christian, without the ministry of the Holy Spirit.

And if you are here today and you identify as a Christian, that means that all that you have and all that you are, you owe to the Holy Spirit. One person I read this week, he said, Wherever Christianity has become a living power, the doctrine of the Holy Spirit has uniformly been regarded as the article of a standing or a falling church.

So I wish that I could give you, given the importance, the magnitude of this topic, I wish we had time to give you a full systematic theology of the Holy Spirit. But be relieved, I'm not going to do that.

But we are going to ask three basic questions. Who, what, and how. Who is the Holy Spirit? What does the Holy Spirit do? And how can we be filled with the Holy Spirit?

Who's the Holy Spirit? What does the Holy Spirit do? How can we be filled with the Holy Spirit? First of all, who is the Holy Spirit? Well, let's start with who the Holy Spirit is not. The Holy Spirit is not a thing.

[7 : 23] The Spirit is not a force. The Spirit is not a power or an energy or an emanation of God. Listen to how Jesus talks about the Spirit in verse 16.

He says, Jesus talks about the Spirit as a person.

He's a living person that you can know or, as Jesus says, you cannot know. And He's a person that you can have a personal relationship with.

The Spirit is not an impersonal force, an impersonal influence or a thing. Jesus says, I'm going to ask the Father, and He's going to give you another advocate. And we're going to get to that word advocate in a moment, but let's talk about the word another.

Because there are two words in Greek that are translated another. One of them means another unlike. But this word here means another like.

[8 : 35] Another exactly like. Another of the same kind. In the Gospel of John, we've seen that Jesus is establishing His identity. And in John chapter 8, He said things like, before Abraham was, I am.

In John chapter 10, He says, I and the Father are one. And Jesus is claiming to be God. He's claiming to be a divine person. And so when He says, I'm going to ask the Father to give you another advocate, He's saying the Father is going to give you another equally divine person. He's going to give you an infinitely and eternally divine person of the same kind, exactly like me. And exactly like the Father. Verse 17, Jesus goes on.

And He says, He's the Spirit of truth, and the world cannot accept Him, because it neither sees Him nor knows Him, but you know Him, for He lives with you, and He'll be in you. And He says, I will not leave you as orphans.

I will come to you. And this is kind of strange, because Jesus has been telling His disciples from the start of chapter 14 that He's actually going to be going away to the Father.

[9 : 46] Right? He's going to go away. He's going to be resurrected from the dead. He's going to ascend to the Father's throne. He's going away to that place where He's going to rule over the kingdom of God and over the nations.

But Jesus also says, I will not leave you orphaned, but I will come to you. So He says, I'm going away from you, and I'm going to come to you. Wait, what? How can you be both going away from us and coming to us at the same time?

Well, welcome to the wonderful, unique doctrine of the Trinity. Because even though I will leave you after my resurrection to ascend to my Father's throne, I'm not going to leave you as orphans.

I'm going to come to you in the person of the Holy Spirit. The presence of the Holy Spirit is how I will come to you. And Jesus says in verse 23, He says, anyone who loves me will obey my teaching.

My Father will love them, and we will come to them, and we will make our home with them. So the question is, how can the Father and the resurrected and living Jesus come to His disciples to make their home with them?

[10 : 57] And the answer is, the person of the Holy Spirit. If you have the Holy Spirit, then you have God at home with you, and you at home with God.

The Holy Spirit is the way that Jesus and the Father continues to be with us, to abide with us, to dwell with us. Now, I don't have time to unpack the Trinity as if that were possible today.

But suffice it to say that Christianity teaches, we don't have one God and one person who just takes on different forms at different times.

Sometimes God is wearing the Father hat, and then sometimes He puts on the Son hat, and then sometimes He puts on the Spirit hat. And we also don't have three gods and three persons.

Jesus is saying that there's one God in three persons who are equally divine, and they love each other supremely. And this is the mysterious and profound and blazing, brilliant heart of the Christian faith.

[12 : 08] Jesus is saying, when you get one, you get all three. In verse 19, Jesus says, because I live, because I'm going to be raised from the dead, you also will live.

And He says in verse 20, on that day you will realize that I am in my Father, and you are in me, and I am in you. When you get the person of the Holy Spirit, you get God.

He will be in you. You will get the very life of God in your soul, and He will dwell right in the middle of your ordinary, everyday life. And so the question for us is, have you met this person, the Spirit?

Do you know this person? Are you in a relationship with this person? That's the first question.

Who's the Holy Spirit? Second question, what does the Holy Spirit do?

What does the Holy Spirit do? Well, when this glorious person, the Holy Spirit, comes into your life, you become aware of His presence and His power.

[13 : 19] And He begins to do many wonderful things in you, and with you, and for you, and through you. And that's what Jesus is talking about in verse 16.

Come back to verse 16. He says, I will ask the Father, and He will give you another advocate to help you and be with you forever. What does that word advocate mean?

Well, if you look at other various versions of the Bible, they translate this word as counselor, or helper, or comforter, or advocate.

And that means it's a multi-dimensional word. It's a deep and a rich word. The Greek word *parakletos*, the *paraclete*. There are two parts of that word.

Para means to come alongside, like a paramedic. Right? It's a supporting word. And then there's *kaleo*, which means to call.

[14 : 16] *Parakaleo*. *Kaleo* means to call, or to summon, or to declare, or to argue like a lawyer. It's a confronting word. Right? And so if you've ever had a true friend, you know that they're both supporting you and confronting you.

Amen? They come alongside you and they argue with you. If they don't argue with you, they're not a true friend. And Jesus is saying, look, the Holy Spirit is a true friend.

He's better than all the friends you've ever had. Better than all your friends put together. And I want to just show you some of the things that this true friend, this *parakletos*, does in your life.

Verse 17, Jesus calls him the spirit of truth. And in verse 25, he elaborates on that. He says, all this I've spoken to you while still with you.

But the advocate, the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in my name, will teach you all things. And will remind you of everything I have said to you. So remember, Jesus is speaking to his disciples.

[15 : 19] And for several years, he's been handing over to them his teachings. Like the Sermon on the Mount and his parables and his claims.

I am the resurrection and the life. I'm the light of the world. All of the explanations. When he would heal someone. When he would feed 5,000 people. When he would forgive people. All of his explanations of what he's doing there. He's given them a lot of content. And he's going to keep on teaching them. For 40 days after the resurrection.

Before he ascends to his father's throne. And what he's saying here is that when the spirit of truth comes. He is going to enable you, my disciples, to remember my words and my works. So that you can go and write it down in the gospel. So that you can go and expound it in the epistles. The spirit of truth is going to create the Bible. And the spirit of truth creates a Bible-based, Jesus-centered community of disciples.

[16 : 23] And for us who are reading the writings of these apostles from the New Testament 2,000 years later. Jesus is saying that the Holy Spirit, our advocate, the spirit of truth, is going to come alongside of us.

And he's going to argue with us through the words of the Bible. And that as he does that, he's going to turn the lights on in our minds and in our hearts.

And he's going to illumine these truths that the Holy Spirit has given to us in the scriptures. And he's going to cause them to begin to make sense in our mind.

And to become real to our heart. And as the spirit comes alongside of us and argues with us, we will begin to know who God is. And what God has done to save us.

You know, we've been blessed to have several babies born to our church pretty recently. We've got at least one I can see in the back here. And, you know, when a baby is born, we don't sit that baby down and teach them and say, well, you're going to need to inhale and exhale.

[17 : 34] And we don't say to them, okay, time to feed, time to sleep. No, a baby does these things naturally and instinctively because it's just part of being alive.

And in the same way, the inhale of reading the Bible and the exhale of praying to God is just what happens when the spirit of God comes in and makes you alive.

You just do it. You inhale and you exhale. You feed. And Jesus is saying that the spirit of truth is the one who causes you to read the book that he revealed and that he inspired.

So that through it, he can teach you about the father and the son. And that you would begin, as you learn more about them, to just begin to start talking to them.

Father, son, and holy spirit. That's what it means for the spirit to come in. You with me? All right. So that's the first, one of the big things that the advocate does.

[18 : 39] But there's so much more that the advocate does. Jesus says, again, in verse 17, he says, The spirit of truth, he's going to come in. The world will not know him, but you know him. And he says in verse 17, For he lives with you and he will be in you.

That's an amazing statement. Jesus came to the synagogue in Nazareth, his hometown. And when he preached his first sermon, he took the scroll of the prophet Isaiah.

And he opened it up to Isaiah 61. And Jesus himself said, The spirit of the sovereign Lord is upon me. And he has enabled me to set the oppressed free and to proclaim the year of the Lord's favor.

And when Jesus says the spirit will be with you and he'll be in you, what he's saying is that same spirit that came down on me and anointed me and empowered me to go out and set terribly oppressed people free, that spirit is going to be in you.

And here's what that means. You might feel stuck in the life that you have. But if the person of the Holy Spirit comes into your life, you cannot remain stuck forever.

[20 : 06] You cannot remain unchanged. You might feel tied down by fears, by habits, by addictions, which have taken a grip on your life.

You might be controlled by bad tempers. You might be enslaved to patterns of thought like envy or lust.

And we know that we're bound when we can't stop something even when we want to stop it, right? But Jesus is saying that the spirit of God is able to set people free from anything that binds them

and anything that oppresses them.

So that there's no wound in you that's so deep that the Holy Spirit cannot heal. And there's no brokenness in you so great that the Holy Spirit cannot repair. And there's no habit in you that's so binding that the Holy Spirit cannot free you from. And there's no memory, there's no narrative that's so strong in your life that the Holy Spirit cannot rewrite your story and rewire your brain.

[21 : 15] If you would just go today and read all the instances in the Gospels of when the Holy Spirit came on Jesus and people who were oppressed were set free, you would realize how amazing it is that the Holy Spirit, who is nothing less than God himself, the advocate exactly like Jesus, would come and take residence in you and begin to live inside of you.

Wow. This is not just the spirit of truth that teaches us the Scriptures. It's not just the spirit of power that sets us free from oppression.

But it's also a spirit of conviction that argues with our head and with our heart, right? Jesus goes on in this upper room discourse in John 16, 8.

He says, when the advocate comes, he will convict the world. He will convict you concerning sin and unbelief. The Holy Spirit, Jesus says, is going to come alongside you and he's going to begin to argue with you like a good friend always does about how self-centered you are.

He'll say, hey, Jonathan, you're being self-interested. You're being self-assertive. And he'll begin to convict you of your pride, convict you of your ego. He'll begin to show you all the ways that you're actually not trusting in the Creator God.

[22 : 48] You're not trusting in the Lord Jesus as you should. And also your advocate who's living within you and comes alongside you will not only convict you of sin, but he'll begin to argue against all the enemies of your heart.

Right? And all those things that I'm sure it's not just me, like all those lies that come into your heart, all those half-truths, all those accusations, all of those false narratives, all those old wounds, all of those selfish desires and those harsh inner critics that want to overtake you and overtake your mind and destroy your life, all those things that cause you to want to base your identity and your security on anything other than what God says about you.

The Holy Spirit comes in, and he's like a star witness. He's like an expert testimony at trial inside of you. And here's what the Apostle Paul says in Romans chapter 5 and chapter 8.

He says, God's love has been poured out into our hearts through the Holy Spirit. And in Romans 8, he says, 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. And the Spirit himself testifies with our spirit that we are God's children.

[24 : 18] So get this. He says, Jesus says, through Paul, He says, Our hearts are subject to fears. And instead of fears, God gives us the spirit of his son Jesus who comes in to drive those fears away and cause us to begin to say, Abba, Father.

To cry out just as Jesus did. And listen to this legal and courtroom language that the Spirit, He says, The Spirit testifies. The Spirit bears witness with our spirit that you are a child of God.

Right? He says, You're on trial. And you're being accused. And you're losing. You're feeling like a failure.

You're feeling, You're overwhelmed by fear. Right? You're overwhelmed by guilt or by shame. And you're sinking down under your doubts. And He says, Then in comes the Holy Spirit with His expert testimony.

And He begins to bear witness to your spirit that you're a child of God. The Spirit can see that you're not living as loved by the Father.

[25 : 31] That you're not living as if you're already approved by the Father. You're already accepted by the Father. The Holy Spirit can see all the ways that we're looking for love in all the wrong places. And He can see that we're not living as if we are actually infinitely and eternally loved.

And so, He says, God pours His love out into our heart by the Holy Spirit. And because of Jesus' work in our place and on our behalf, the Spirit says, You are God's, God the Father's beloved child. You are treasured. You are cherished as a daughter. And as a son of God. He loves you as He loves Jesus. Jesus.

The Spirit wants to come in and teach us the truth of the Bible. The Spirit wants to come in power to set us free from oppression.

The Spirit wants to come in conviction and argue with us about our identity. And then finally, the Spirit just wants to overflow through us to bless other people.

[26 : 42] And this is what Jesus means in John 7. In verse 38, He says, Whoever believes in Me, as the Scripture has said, rivers of living water will flow from within them. And by this He meant the Spirit.

He's saying, If you believe in Jesus, the river of the Holy Spirit will begin to overflow from within. Like a river of fresh and living water that brings life and fruitfulness and healing to other people. So the Holy Spirit's not just in you for you. The Holy Spirit's in you for others. For the sake of others. So that when you feel a sense of helplessness, as you confront the problems out there, in your life and in the world, when you sense that you have very little to nothing to offer to people whose lives are an absolute mess, including yourself, you can remember that you have the Spirit of God living within you.

And that He'll give you a strength. He'll give you an energy that you did not otherwise possess so that the river of God's life can flow not just in you, but through you to give life to other people.

Man, I wish we had more time to talk about what the Spirit does. This is just a little bit of Jesus' teaching. A little bit of the New Testament teaching. Who is the Spirit?

[28 : 05] What does the Spirit do? But let me just close by talking about how we can be filled with the Spirit. And this is so important. If you've fallen asleep, time to wake up.

How can we be filled with the Spirit? Jesus has this really interesting conversation we looked at several weeks ago in John 3. He's talking to Nicodemus. And he says, you've got to be born of the Spirit.

Spirit gives birth to Spirit. And he's teaching Nicodemus the doctrine of the new birth, the doctrine of regeneration. And here's how it works. He says, the Holy Spirit enables you to see the work of your first advocate, Jesus.

That Jesus came and He lived the life that you ought to have lived. That Jesus died the death that you deserve to die. That He went on His cross and He said, it is finished. And the second advocate, the Holy Spirit, who's exactly like the first advocate, Jesus, He comes in and He shows you the reality and the power of what Jesus has done to bring you into a reconciled relationship with God the Father.

He begins to make that logical to your mind and beautiful to your heart. And at some point, you begin to realize, I think the Holy Spirit has regenerated me.

[29 : 25] I think I've been born of the Spirit. I'm not sure what's going on in my life right now, but I think I've just received the gift of repentance and faith. I think that I've had a change of status so that I'm justified and in a right standing before God.

I've become adopted adopted as a child of the King. I've become freed from all my fears and guilt and shame. I've been filled with a new kind of love and joy and peace.

I've got this strange new mix of humility and boldness going on in my life. I think I've been born, as Jesus said, I've been born of the Spirit. And you realize that a powerful person has come from outside of you to take up residence inside of you.

And that's the only way you can become a Christian is to be born of the Spirit, to be filled with the Spirit. But the Apostle Paul says this in Ephesians 5. He says, be filled with the Spirit.

And this is strange because he's writing to a church that's full of Spirit-born, Spirit-filled Christians. But he's telling them, you need to be filled with the Spirit.

[30 : 42] And what he's saying is a present imperative. He's indicating that this is not just a one-and-done filling. That rather, this is a regular pattern of being filled.

You could translate it, go on being filled with the Holy Spirit. Or continually be being filled with the Holy Spirit. He's saying, there are free refills of the Holy Spirit.

This would be like saying to Pastor Andrew, for the rest of your life, you can have a free daily filling of Taco Bell. And it, like, he would be dancing in the aisles if that were true.

What happens when we keep coming back for the refilling of the Holy Spirit? Paul says in 2 Corinthians 3, he says, we, beholding the Lord's glory, are being transformed into that same image of his glory from one degree of glory to another.

And all of this happens because of the Lord who is the Spirit. So, Paul says, if you're filled with the Holy Spirit, you're then going to behold the glory of the Lord Jesus.

[31 : 57] And if you behold the glory of the Lord Jesus, then the Holy Spirit is going to transform you by degrees into the glory of that same image of Jesus. And he's going to begin introducing a change in your condition from one degree of glory to the next so that you can begin to look back in your life and say, I used to not be very much like Jesus and somehow I'm becoming more like Jesus.

And this is what Jesus has baked into his own teaching here in John 14. He says in verse 15, if you love me, keep or obey my commands.

Verse 21, whoever has my commands and keeps them or obeys them is the one who loves me.

Verse 23, anyone who loves me will keep or obey my teaching.

Now let me just give you one example of Jesus' commands. He says, in the Sermon on the Mount, he says, love your enemies, do good to those who hate you, bless those who curse you, and pray for those who abuse you.

Now if you've tried that for five minutes, you know it's impossible. How can you do any of that on your own power? Bless those who curse you, pray for those who abuse you?

[33 : 12] No, you need a power outside of yourself. You need to go on being filled with the Holy Spirit if you're going to do that. And Jesus is saying that the advocate, the Holy Spirit, if you ask him, if you seek him, he will come and empower you to demonstrate your love for Jesus by obeying his commands.

And the New Testament teaches that when we don't obey God's commands, we quench the Holy Spirit. We grieve the Holy Spirit. We render the Holy Spirit not able to operate as he would like to in our lives and in the church.

But the opposite is true. When we obey the Lord, when we obey his teachings it releases more of the Holy Spirit in our lives. Jesus says in verse 21, if you obey me, I will show myself to you.

He says in verse 23, if you obey me, I will come to you. Would you like for Jesus to make himself more plain and clear to you? Would you like for Jesus to give more of himself to you?

You've got to obey him by the power of the Spirit. One commentator says, Jesus will reveal himself even more powerfully and inwardly to the disciple who turns in faith and love to his Lord in an attempt to carry out his commands.

[34 : 39] And when Jesus says, obey me, he's not asking us to do something he hasn't already done, right? this is baked into who God is, the surrender of obedience in the first advocate, Jesus.

He gives up his glory, he goes to the cross and we say, wow, how selfless. The second advocate, the Holy Spirit, points away from himself to Jesus to show us the glory of Jesus, the beauty of Jesus and we say, wow, how unselfish.

God the Father empties the greatest treasure of heaven by sending his Son. Jesus empties himself and gives himself.

The Holy Spirit is not about him, he's about Jesus. We look at that and we say, behold, divine selflessness, divine surrender. And when Jesus says, obey me, he's just saying, do what we've done.

Do what we've done. Obeying Jesus means following this Trinitarian pattern of selfless surrender. And if you do that, then you will find that the ministry of the Holy Spirit begins flooding your life.

[35 : 52] If you feel dry, if you feel like there's not a lot going on spiritually, if you begin to do this, you will begin to know the glory and the joy of having this advocate come and fill you, as Jesus says, like rivers of living water bubbling up and flowing out from you.

Don't you want that? Amazing. May God give that to us in the name of the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Thank you.