

Assured Devotion

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[0:00] Amen. You may be seated. Kids, you are now excused to your King's Kids classes. And if you would open up your Bibles to John chapter 14.

! At that point, you're supposed to say, Amen.

The problem is we don't think we need help. Or we don't like asking for help. Do I have an Amen? Years ago, when I was a younger lad, I got in my head to move our children's wooden fort swing set structure by myself.

So I got under that thing and leg pressed that baby six inches up into the air. And I somehow carried it 45 feet.

It was like a strongman competition and I was pulling a Peterbilt. Turns out my neighbor was watching me through his sliding glass door. Later he asks me, Why didn't you ask for help?

[1:21] He was willing, he was present, he was able. I just kind of shrugged my shoulders. Because I didn't want to tell him. I didn't want to tell him what I was really thinking.

I didn't want to ask for help. Because I think I could do it alone. And when it comes to obeying Jesus' commands, we think we can go it alone.

This morning we continue working our way through the farewell discourse of Jesus. He's just hours away from dying. This is John 13, 14, 15, 16, and 17.

He's going to be raised from the dead. And then he's going to depart to be with his father. And then 40 days after that, He will ascend.

He will ascend to his father. And then 50 days after that, excuse me, Pentecost. So the Son of God will depart. And when he departs, he will send the Holy Spirit.

[2:30] The farewell discourse turns out to be a discourse of assurance for the believer. Brothers and sisters, we don't need to be afraid that Jesus is not physically present with us right now.

We're living in between his appearances, his first coming and his second coming. And in between, he's given the Holy Spirit to help us.

And so this morning in John 14, 15 through 31, Jesus is going to make us aware of two needs. Your first need is the need to obey Jesus and all that he commands.

And your second need is the need for help to do that. And not just any kind of help. The Holy Spirit's help.

And the problem is we don't like acknowledging our need or asking for help. When it comes to obeying Jesus' commands, we need the Spirit's help.

[3:38] So let me read John 14, 15 through 31, and then we'll walk through it together. Jesus says, If you love me, you will keep my commandments.

And I will ask the Father, and he will give you another helper to be with you forever, even the Spirit of truth, whom the world cannot receive, because it neither sees him nor knows him. You know him, for he dwells with you and will be in you.

I will not leave you as orphans. I will come to you. Yet a little while, and the world will see me no more. But you will see me. Because I live, you also will live. And that day you will know that I am in my Father, and you in me, and I in you.

Whoever has my commandments and keeps them, he it is who loves me. And he who loves me will be loved by my Father, and I will love him and manifest myself to him.

Judas, not Iscariot, a.k.a. Thaddeus, said to him, Lord, how is it that you will manifest yourself to us and not to the world?

[4:48] Jesus answered him, if anyone loves me, he will keep my word, and my Father will love him, and we will come to him and make our home with him.

Whoever does not love me does not keep my words. And the word that you hear is not mine, but the Father's who sent me. These things I've spoken to you while I'm still with you, but the Helper, the Holy Spirit, the Spirit of holiness, whom the Father will send in my name, he will teach you all things and bring to your remembrance all that I have said to you.

Peace I leave with you, my peace I give to you, not as the world gives do I give to you. Let not your hearts be troubled, neither let them be afraid.

You heard me say to you, I'm going away, and I will come to you. If you loved me, you would have rejoiced, because I'm going to the Father, for the Father is greater than I. And now I have told you before it takes place, so that when it does take place, you may believe.

I will no longer talk much with you, for the ruler of this world, a reference to Satan, coming in Judas in John 18. For the ruler of this world is coming, he has no claim, no authority on me, but I do as the Father has commanded me, so that the world may know that I love the Father.

[6:15] Rise, let us go from here. So this morning, from this passage, I want you to see two needs. your need to obey Jesus and what he commands, and your need for the Holy Spirit's help.

So let's look at this first need. We need to obey Jesus. And so from this passage, I want to show you a few important words. The first word is the word keep.

K-E-E-P. Look at verse 15. If you love me, you will keep my commandments. Look at verse 21.

Whoever has my commandments and keeps them, he it is who loves me. Verse 23. If anyone loves me, he will keep my word.

And in verse 24, we have the opposite. Whoever does not love me does not keep my words. Jesus is using his commandments and his words interchangeably.

[7:26] The emphasis here is on keeping them. It's more than agreement. It's more than agreeing that Jesus said these words. It's more than just saying, yes, Jesus did command that.

It's actually obeying the command. That's what it means to keep the commandment, to keep his word.

It's acting in obedience to do what Jesus has said. Or maybe you're familiar with James chapter 1. Not being a hearer of the word only, but being a doer of the word.

We are to do, to keep the commands that Jesus has given. Earlier in John 13, 17, Jesus says something very similar. He has just washed his disciples' feet as an example to them to serve one another.

And then in chapter 13, verse 17, he says this. If you know these things, if you know you're to serve one another, blessed are you if you do them.

[8:36] if you keep them. If you live out the command. Blessed are you if you keep his commandments.

So to keep his commandment is to actually, by faith, step out and do what he's commanding you to do. The second word I want you to see is the word commandments.

To keep the commands of Jesus is to keep the commands of God. Because Jesus is fully God. Totally God. Totally man. He is the one and only Son of God. The Word became flesh and dwelt among us. He has the right as God to require us, his followers, to live a certain way.

His way. The way of the kingdom. Years ago, I got to preach through the book of Matthew and I loved it and I loved preaching through the Sermon on the Mount.

[9:47] The greatest sermon ever preached. Matthew 5, 6, and 7. And when I preached through that sermon in that section, I called it the Kingdom Manifesto.

How Christ's citizens, how his followers are to live. Because in the Sermon on the Mount, Jesus outlines for us, Christians, how we are to live.

Both in our character, think of the Beatitudes, and then in our conduct, what follows after the Beatitudes. In that sermon, Jesus lays out command after command after command of how we are to live when it comes to anger, when it comes to lust, when it comes to divorce, when it comes to retaliation and anxiety and judging others and loving your neighbor as yourself.

There's no place in the Sermon on the Mount where Jesus makes any of these commands optional. He's saying this is normative for all Christians. And just so that we are all on the same page, it's not by obeying Jesus' commands that you are brought into the kingdom.

It doesn't work that way. It's because you've been brought into the kingdom by God's grace that you now obey Christ's commands. We're not saved by good works, we're saved for good works.

[11:25] But they're commands. These are commandments that Jesus has given. They're not optional. In verses 34 and 35 of chapter 13, we come across the new commandment.

Jesus says, a new commandment I give to you that you love one another just as I have loved you, you also are to love one another. By this, all people will know that you are my disciples if you have love for one another.

This is not optional. He's saying, this is required of all of my citizens. Everyone who's claimed me as their Savior and Lord is to obey me in this way.

So we have keeping, we have commandments, and now the last phrase I want you to see is the phrase, if you love me.

Verse 15, if you love me, you will keep my commandments. Verse 21, whoever has my commandments and keeps them, he it is who loves me.

[12:41] Verse 23, if anyone loves me, if anyone loves me, he will keep my word. Verse 24, again the opposite, whoever does not love me does not keep my word.

A couple weeks ago, I defined love as essentially a commitment. And what Jesus is doing here is he's couching obedience to his commands in relational commitment language.

It's very intentional. We are to think in terms of our relationship with Jesus, loving him, being committed to him as he's been committed to us, we are to obey him.

We are to do what he says. This kind of obedience in terms of this kind of relational transaction, this kind of obedience, don't think of it as a dour, wah, obedience of, of course I will obey you.

Now think about it as a delighted obedience. Do you know why? Because when Jesus Christ is your greatest treasure, obedience flows downhill.

[14:06] when the source, when Jesus is your greatest delight, the object of your highest worship, the one whom you're living for day after day, and he tells you to do something, you say yes, not out of a dour frown, but out of joyful delight, because this is your savior and king, and he's calling you to do something, and his commandments are not burdensome, his commandments are always good, they are intended to give you life, and his commandments is the way of blessing, it's the way of peace, it's the way of goodness, it's God's way.

His commandments are to us, life. And so we love him by obeying him.

It's not forced obedience. It's willful, joyful, yes and amen, I know who you are, and I will obey you.

Do you all remember how Jesus ends the Sermon on the Mount? He ends with a parable. He says, anyone who hears my words and does them, this is his close to his sermon, if anyone hears my words and does them, he is like a man who builds his house upon a rock, and the winds came, and they blew against, and the rains came, and that house stood, but anyone who hears my words and does not do them, he's like a man who builds his house on the sand, and the rain came, and the wind blew, and he knocked that house down.

We have the joy of obeying Jesus, building our lives on the rock-solid truths of his commandments. And so, your need this morning is a need for the goodness of his life and his ways.

[16:17] So you must obey him. Before I move on to the second point, I just want to make something clear. Disobedience that we're talking about, this is normal Christianity.

This is normal discipleship, normal following Jesus. Jesus himself commanded this in the Great Commission. When all authority in heaven and earth is given to him, he says, go, go make disciples of the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit, teaching them to keep all that I have commanded.

It's normal. Every one of us in this room, if you are a follower of Jesus, we are to be obeying his words. Do you need to review what he has commanded you to do?

Is there something, something of a command he has called you to that you are purposefully avoiding? This is normal following of Jesus.

The second need is our need for help. We need help in obeying his commands. I don't know about you.

[17:48] Is there anybody else in the room that are feeling a little bit out of their depth right now? Feeling a little bit over your head? You're feeling like you're getting exposed because in your inner person, you are thinking there is no way I could possibly obey Jesus, all of Jesus' commands, all the time in every area of my life.

That's spot on. You can't. There's no way in and of yourself you can obey Jesus in all of his commands in all of your life all of the time.

There's just no way. And if you think that you can do that or you think that you have arrived or if you think you don't need help, you've been mistaken.

And you need to listen very carefully what we're about to talk about. Let me just remind everyone in the room what Jesus said in the Sermon on the Mount.

This is Matthew 6, 48. Be perfect as my heavenly Father is perfect. Anybody perfect in the room? [19:14] We all need help. We all There's no way. But that doesn't mean we give up.

I've encountered many Christians who are like, I'm sick of sinning, I just want to give up. I want to give up, I want to blend in, I want to be like everybody else.

That's not how you respond. We need help. And Jesus is very clear in this section that the Holy Spirit, He is our helper.

Look at the connection between verses 15 and 16. If you love me, Jesus says, you will keep my commandments. And then look what He does.

And I will ask the Father and He will give you another helper to be with you forever. Helper? Helper in what? Well, what did He just tell us to do? To obey Him.

[20:20] The Spirit is our great helper in obeying Jesus' commands. He provides what we need. The Holy Spirit has been referenced throughout the Gospel of John very sporadically up to this point.

In John's Gospel, we first encounter a reference to the Holy Spirit in John 1 when John the Baptist, JTB, he introduces Jesus and he says he is the one that's going to baptize with the Holy Spirit.

And what that's a reference to is that Jesus is bringing with him the new covenant. the next thing we learn of the Holy Spirit is in John 3 where Jesus is speaking with Nicodemus at night and Jesus is like you got to be born again and Nicodemus is like what are you talking about?

And then Jesus is like you need the Holy Spirit to give you new life. You need to be born again. And then Jesus in John 7, 37 through 39, again speaks of the need for living water.

And John tells us he's referring to the Holy Spirit. It's not until here in chapters 14 and 16 that Jesus starts speaking quite a bit about the Holy Spirit because Jesus is on the verge of departing.

[21:43] He's about to leave. He's about to die, be raised, and then ascend to heaven and then the Spirit will be sent. Just so you're referencing in the Old Testament, the prophets of God spoke of a coming era, a new era, different than the era they were living in, in which the Holy Spirit would play a much more active role among God's new people.

He would be bringing about obedience from within them, from their hearts. And so the pouring out of the Holy Spirit, which took place at Pentecost, Acts 2, would be a distinguishing mark of the new covenant.

Jeremiah 31. Ezekiel 36. Joel chapter 2. The new covenant was a new era in which God would relate with his new people, the church, in a new way.

The Holy Spirit would indwell each of God's saints, causing them to obey him from within. sin.

And that new covenant was put into effect through blood, the blood of Jesus. His once and for all death inaugurated the new covenant, inaugurated God's new way of relating to a new people, and it made the old one obsolete.

[23:15] So Jesus starts talking about the Holy Spirit on the eve of his death.

Verse 25, he says, I'm still with you, but I'm going to talk to you about the Holy Spirit because I'm leaving and the Holy Spirit will soon be coming. So for the balance of our time, I want to draw out from this passage a number of things about the Holy Spirit that you must know and believe because he's your helper to obey Jesus.

The first thing we learn about the Holy Spirit, this helper we need, is that he is a person. Look at verse 26, but the helper, the spirit of holiness, the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in my name, he's going to be sent for the glory of Jesus.

He will teach you all things. He will teach you all things. In the original language in which John was written, John had some choices of the word he could use right there.

He very intentionally chose the word he. It's a personal pronoun. Now, if you look at chapter 14, and if you turn over to verse 16, we read this, and I will ask the Father, and he will give you another helper to be with you forever, even the spirit of truth, whom the world cannot receive, because it neither sees him nor knows him, you know him, for he dwells with you and will be in you.

[25:05] If you turn over to John chapter 16, I can't wait to preach this in a couple weeks. In 16, 12-14, Jesus says, I still have many things to say to you, but you cannot bear them.

Now, when the spirit of truth comes, he will guide you into all the truth, for he will not speak on his own authority, but whatever he hears, he will speak, and he will declare to you the things that are to come.

He will glorify me, for he will take what is mine and declare to you. He, he, he, him, him, he, him, he. The Holy Spirit's not an it.

This Holy Spirit's a who. He's not a divine mist. He is not an it. He is a who. He is the third person of the Trinity.

The Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit. Each are persons of the Trinity. God the Father ordains our salvation, God the Son accomplishes our salvation, and God the Holy Spirit applies the finished work of Jesus Christ to the life of a Christian.

[26 : 29] You see that laid out beautifully in Ephesians 1, 3, 3, through 14 to the praise of his glory. One of the other compelling things that we read in our Bibles, AJ referenced this leading up to his prayer, even in his prayer.

What is a giveaway of the personhood of the Holy Spirit is that you can grieve him. You're not going to grieve your dog. You're not going to grieve your Honda Ridgeline.

You're not going to grieve your boiler. You grieve people. People grieve. And so, in Ephesians 4, 29-30, we're exhorted to use our words to build one another up, not tear one another down.

And then, and then we're told, don't grieve the Holy Spirit who has sealed you for the day of redemption. And then he goes on to say, put all bitterness away, all anger, malice, get that out of you. So, here's what's going on.

When we speak to each other in ways that tear each other down, it grieves the Holy Spirit. When we hold on to bitterness or grudges against one another, it grieves the Holy Spirit.

[27 : 43] Do you know why? Because the Holy Spirit is working in our midst to build us up, to unite us in love.

And so, when we sin against him, and we are working against the grain of the Spirit and what he's wanting to do in our midst, it grieves him. We can grieve God.

God the Holy Spirit. First thing you need to know about this Holy Spirit, our helper, this one who's being sent by God to help us obey Jesus, is a he, a who, not an it.

The second thing I want you to see is in verse 17. This person is present. Look at verse 17. Even the Spirit of truth, whom the world cannot receive, because it neither sees him nor knows him, you know him, for he dwells with you and will be in you.

The you, of course, are his disciples. He's been with you. The Holy Spirit has been present in some kind of way with his disciples while Jesus was there in some kind of measure.

[28 : 57] But when Jesus leaves, the Holy Spirit is going to come to be in them, to be present.

Look at verse 23.

Jesus answered him, Thaddeus, if anyone loves me, he will keep my word and my father will love him and we will come to him and make our home with him.

We will dwell with him. We will make our dwelling with him, in him. Anyone who loves me and does my word, they will have God dwelling with them.

Amen. Throughout the Bible, there's this theme of God dwelling with his people.

God with Adam and Eve in the garden. God with his people on the move in the tabernacle, fancy tent, portable. God would come down in Shekinah glory and meet with Moses face to face.

[30 : 09] And then that tabernacle, the next stage of God dwelling with his people, was the building of the temple by Solomon. And God came and dwelt in that temple in his glory.

The temple was torn down and rebuilt. And then the word became flesh and tabernacled among us. John 1.14.

Jesus is God literally walking around with his people. You'd think that would be the best. But it's not the best.

Because Jesus departs and the spirit comes. And now, the spirit dwells in his people. We are the living temple of God and God dwells in us by his spirit.

He dwells in us individually and he dwells in us corporately. But it gets better. Because there's coming a day when Jesus comes back, he recreates everything, the heavens and the earth, and we're going to be brought into the new earth and we're going to see Jesus face to face and we're still going to be indwelt fully by the Holy Spirit.

[31:24] It's going to be amazing. God dwelling with his people exponentially. God dwelling with his people. The Holy Spirit, our helper, is a person who dwells in us.

He's present. He's on sight to help us obey Jesus. Personal, present, powerful.

He is dwelling with us in power, actively present. remember that 15-16 connection, if you love me you will keep my commandments, how's that going to happen?

And I will ask the Father and he will give you another helper to be with you forever to empower you to obey me, to obey Jesus' commands, to love one another.

Here's a wonderful thought. The Holy Spirit, Christian, the Holy Spirit that indwells you, he wants you to love your brothers and sisters more than you want to love your brothers and sisters.

[32:59] He wants to compel you, to transform you, to conform you to the image of Jesus so that you would become more and more loving, not because you have to, but because you want to.

He's going to change you from the inside out. That's power. power. In verses 16 and 26, Jesus calls the Holy Spirit the helper.

Other Bible translations translate it advocate or counselor. It's the Greek word parakletos. It means one who is called alongside. It's like paramedic.

Someone gets hurt. You call 911 and the medics come alongside the person's hurt to help them. Jesus sends the Holy Spirit as one who comes alongside us to help us in this context to obey Jesus.

He's the greatest helper of all. What kind of power are we talking about? Are we talking nuclear power, electric power? In John 3, we're given a clue.

[34:11] The Holy Spirit gives new life. He radically changes people by giving them new life.

It's the power that raises people from the dead power. It's enlivening power, life-giving power. There was one writer, Thomas Chalmers, wrote a piece called the expulsive power of a new affection. It's life translating into power, transformation. I've been looking forward to this moment in the sermon for a while.

I'm going to turn to Romans chapter 8. And will you just receive this? because here's how I want you to feel.

It's like, brother, sister, you don't have the life you need. The Holy Spirit has the life you need. 8, 1, and 2, there is therefore now no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus.

[35:26] Amen. For the law of the Spirit of life has set you free in Christ Jesus from the law of sin and death. Look at 5 and 6.

For those who live according to the flesh set their minds on the things of the flesh, but those who live according to the Spirit set their minds on the things of the Spirit. For to set the mind on the flesh is death, but to set the mind on the Spirit is life and peace.

Verses 10 and 11. But if Christ is in you, although the body is dead because of sin, the Spirit is life because of righteousness. If the Spirit of Him who raised Jesus from the dead dwells in you, He who raised Christ Jesus from the dead will also give life to your mortal bodies through His Spirit who dwells in you so that you can live for God.

And then there's this. 8.13. For if you live according to the flesh, you will die.

but if by the Spirit you put to death the deeds of the body, you will live. The Spirit is a slayer of sin and a giver of life.

[36:47] And that's exactly what He's wanting to do in you. Remember Galatians 5, 22-25? The fruit of the Spirit? If we walk by the Spirit, we will bear the fruit of the Spirit.

Love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, gentleness, faithfulness, and self-control. It's a profile of Jesus. The Spirit is looking to radically change us so that we would obey the commands of Jesus for Jesus in order to become like Jesus.

It's all beautiful. Verse 17, it's called the Spirit of Truth because Jesus is the truth. I'm the way, the truth, and the life.

And so we're going to learn in a couple weeks that the Holy Spirit seeks to spotlight Jesus. So of course He's the Spirit of Truth. He's going to want to reveal Jesus to us in greater and greater measure.

He's the Spirit of holiness in verse 26. He shows us Jesus' way. way. Jesus is the way. And so the Spirit of God is going to empower you to become like Jesus, to conform you to the image of Jesus.

[38:03] This isn't anything extraordinary in the sense of like bells whistling and angels singing. So to walk by the Spirit in the Bible is moral categories.

To become more and more like Jesus in your character and your conduct. He's going to empower you to obey from the inside out.

He will make you want to say yes to Jesus and to say no to sin. That's what the Holy Spirit's doing in you. That's the new covenant promise being fulfilled.

He's going to reveal God's glory. You're going to taste God's goodness. He is this active helper who is our power in order to obey Jesus.

He's our helper. There's one more thing I want to point out what the Holy Spirit will do. He's personal. He's personally present in you believer.

[39:06] He's personally present in powerful wanting to help you obey Jesus. And you know what he brings about? Peace. Look at verse 27.

Verse 27. Verse 27 reads, Peace I leave with you. My peace I give to you.

Not as the world gives do I give to you. Let not your hearts be troubled, neither let them be afraid. The Holy Spirit's powerful presence brings about peace, love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, gentleness, faithfulness, and self-control.

What kind of peace? It's the kind of peace where let not your hearts be troubled, do not be afraid. Your God is with you.

Your God is in you. He's empowering you to obey Him. It's an assured devotion. He assures our devotion to Christ, our obedience to Him, by indwelling us at the moment we believe by the Holy Spirit.

[40:31] So in the physical absence of Jesus, the Holy Spirit will give us peace, shalom. not as the world gives. The kind of peace the world gives is temporary, circumstantial.

The peace that Jesus gives, and I believe the peace is referencing the Holy Spirit, is first and foremost peace with God.

There is therefore now no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus. because we've been justified by faith, we have peace with God.

In Romans 8, Galatians 4, the Spirit of God who indwells us bears witness to our spirit that we are children of God, and so one of the effects of being given new life by the Holy Spirit is this peaceful declaration of a Father.

my God is for me. That's a spirit utterance from a heart that's been radically changed by the new life the Spirit gives.

[41:49] Brothers and sisters, be assured, you are a spirit-born, blood-bought son or daughter of the living God, And your inclination to call him God your father, that comes from the Spirit's work in you.

And this is true regardless of your circumstances. Because of the finished work of Jesus applied to you, you have peace with God forever.

Period. brothers and sisters, we need the Spirit's help in order to obey Jesus' commands. Personal, present, powerful, and he brings peace.

Anybody want that? Now, the point of this is very simple. We need the Spirit's help to keep Jesus' commands.

I'm out of time. Two questions. Are you actively seeking to keep the commands of Jesus Christ?

[43:09] Are you actively seeking to keep them? When you are living your life, are there words of Jesus popping up on the screen of your consciousness?

Are you like, oh, this would not please him? A mature Christian will hold himself or herself to the commands of Jesus.

That's maturity. They are most concerned about what Jesus says in obeying him. Second question is, are you actively seeking the Spirit's help to help you keep the commands of Jesus?

Are you being led by the Spirit? Romans 8, Galatians 5. Friends, do you not realize that if the Holy Spirit is convicting you of sin, you are being led by the Spirit?

That's him loving you? that's him wanting you to obey the commands of Jesus? That's his kindness. And the Holy Spirit renews our minds upon the Scriptures he inspired so that we would obey him.

[44:35] So let me just urge you by way of closing, call out to the Spirit of God to give you power to obey.

Obey the commands of Jesus. Here's what we're going to do. I'm going to give you a few seconds here for you to act on that personally, to call out and say, Spirit of God, help me to obey you, and then I'll close us.

Let's bow our heads. Let's bow Let's bow Let's bow Let's bow Let's bow Let's bow our heads.
Spirit of the living God, you are welcome in this place. You are welcome in each of our hearts and lives.

And we would ask you to fill us once again with the Holy Spirit. Father, fill us with your Spirit that we would live for Christ.

[46 : 06] that we would put to death sin and bring to life that which pleases you in obedience to you. God, we need your help.

Would you help us? I pray for those brothers and sisters in this room right now who feel stuck in their sin. Spirit of the living God, fall afresh upon them.

Deliver them for the glory of your name. Amen. Amen. Thank you.