

John 14:21-29

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[0:00] Pray. Lord God, we thank you for your goodness and mercy to us. We thank you, Lord, for your word, which is life to us. We thank you, Lord, for your Holy Spirit, which illuminates your word to us, Lord.

And Lord, we pray now that you will be present among us to teach, to reveal, to illuminate your word to us, Lord.

And Lord, we ask that you give us ears to hear and hearts to obey, to love you, and to obey you. We pray this in Jesus' name. Amen. I want us to keep these three points in mind.

And I'm going to say it right from the beginning of the sermon, and we will go through it as the thematic theme of this passage. But I want you to keep it in mind as we go ahead. As we go ahead, and I apologize for the coughing, but that will probably persist a bit, so you'll have to bear with me. These three things, keep it in mind. The Spirit-filled church is a word-centered church. That's the one. The word-centered church will be an apostolic church.

[1:11] And thirdly, the apostolic church will be a cruciform. That means cross-proclaiming church.

Keep that in mind. We'll keep going through it as we go forward. I think Bishop Dave rightly commented about these passages that we're going through during Eastertide.

It's ironic, or maybe hard, that we should be going through the Upper Room Discourse, which is John 13-17. Which is Jesus' conversation and teaching of his disciples right before he goes to the cross.

It's a very somber time. And we are celebrating Easter. This is Eastertide. So why are we in these verses during Eastertide? But I think, as he said last week, there is a reason for it.

And I hope that last week during this sermon you saw the reason why this was important to go through, and even again this week. Because Jesus is giving us confidence in his work and his person in these verses.

[2:25] So, preceding the verse that we have this morning, Jesus is, again, remember that at this Upper Room, he had washed his disciples' feet. And he has instituted the Lord's Supper with them.

And now Jesus is going away. He's telling them, I am going to go away. And he's preparing his disciples for life without him. He assures them that his going away is good for them.

And he guarantees them that his going away means for them life with God. And he guarantees that that life entails the gift of the Spirit.

That is the Holy Spirit. It entails fellowship with the Father and the Son. With the peace of Christ as their possession. All of these things Jesus is showing his disciples in these verses.

And I actually want us to begin in verse 20. Because in verse 20, Jesus says, he gives them the consequence of the resurrection life that they have. He says that the consequence of the resurrection life is new life for all those who are found in Christ.

[3:41] This new life is that of communion with the Father through the Son brought about by the Holy Spirit. That is, the promise of God in the preceding verses, especially verse 15 on, the promises of God in those verses, It comes by, comes to fruition because of Jesus' resurrection.

Because he lives. Because death could not hold him captive. All those who love him will also live. That's what Jesus is saying in these verses.

His resurrection life is ours as well. Excuse me. So from verse 21 on, Jesus then articulates what this love for him looks like.

He says, 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. So we see here, in John's theology, throughout actually the Gospel of John, you will see, and even in his epistles, 1st John, 2nd John, 3rd John, the

joining theology shows the close proximity between love for God and obedience to God.

[5:11] They are intimately connected. Love is shown in obedience to Christ's command. Our obedience to Christ's command is conditioned by our love for him.

And in turn, such a person who loves God and obeys God's command, Jesus is saying in this verse, will also be loved by the Father.

And it is to such people that Christ will manifest himself. What does that mean? To manifest. As he says, I will, whoever the Father loves, and I will love him as well and manifest myself to him, Jesus says.

Well, manifest means to reveal. To show himself. So Jesus is promising that those who love him and obey his commandments will be loved by his Father.

And he himself will love them and manifest himself to them. So he will reveal himself. This is not a promise to just the eleven alone that he's speaking to.

[6:18] But it's a promise to the whole church. It is to whoever loves God and obeys God that Jesus will reveal and manifest himself to.

It is to the faithful assembly of saints which we are among them. And so Judas hearing this, Judas, and we're made to note here that this Judas is a different Judas, not the famous Judas, Judas Iscariot.

There are two Judas's among Jesus' disciples. This is Judas Taddaeus. And you remember that in this part of the upper room discourse, Judas Iscariot already left right after the foot washing, even before the, and he had left to do what he aimed to do, which is to betray Jesus.

So he's not among them. This is just the eleven. And so Judas Taddaeus asked Jesus this question. He noticed that Jesus, he will reveal himself to the world.

And so he thinks to himself, how can you manifest yourself to your disciples as Jesus promises to do and not do it to the whole world? Judas, like the rest of the eleven apostles present, he hasn't fully grasped Jesus' impending death and subsequent resurrection.

[7:38] But he knows this much. If Jesus reveals himself as he says he would, it will be in power and splendor. At least that's what he's expecting Jesus to do. Reveal himself in power and splendor.

This manifestation of God. So, how are you going to do it, Jesus? How are you going to reveal yourself to us without revealing yourself to the whole world?

How is he going to limit his revelation to his disciples alone? That is the point of Judas' question.

And he's probably also wondering, why wouldn't you reveal yourself and your kingdom to the whole world in overwhelming power?

That's really what we want you to do. After all, they still don't get the cross. They are confused. They are bewildered in this upper room discourse.

Thomas is yet to understand, along with the eleven, that as we have done, as we have come to understand, he is yet to understand that the time that we're in right now is the church age.

[8:44] God reveals himself, God's power is displayed in the world in and through the church.

I want to repeat that again. We're in the church and this is God's promise being fulfilled among us. God's power and presence and work and ministry is revealed in the world in and through the church by the power of the Holy Spirit.

And as we read in Revelation, there will come a day, there will come a day when God will reveal himself when every knee will bow and every tongue will confess whether willfully in willful, obedient, surrender or compelled to by God's great majesty and confess Jesus's.

So he will reveal himself. That day will come when he will reveal himself to the whole world undeniably. But right now, God reveals and that's the promise Jesus is making here. God's promise is that in this age, his promise is sure and trustworthy.

He promises that he remains with us and relates to us in an intimate and mystical union. And it's not just Jesus actually that relates with us and is related to him.

[10:00] He says here that the Father and the Holy Spirit are also in communion with us too. Here is the wonderful promise of our Lord to us who have come to love him and obey him.

That those who grasp his commands, that's actually what it means when he says whoever has my commandments, those who have grasped it with their mind and their heart and those who have come to God his word in their hearts and yield fruit of that guardian of God's word by their love, Jesus promises that he will have an ongoing fellowship with them.

But not only Jesus, the triune God, the Father, Son and Holy Spirit promises that he will have an ongoing fellowship with us. What a wonderful promise. And again, look here in verse 23.

Jesus says, if anyone loves me, he will keep my word. And my Father will love him. And we will come to him, Jesus says, and make our own with him.

Who is Jesus promising this to? It is to anyone. Look at in verse 23 again. If anyone, it's not just talking to the 11, if anyone loves me and keeps my word, anyone who hears, believes, guards, and treasures the word of God, to such people, Jesus says, God the Father, God the Son, God the Holy Spirit promises to dwell with them.

[11:37] God promises, God's promise is that you will be the very temple of God. That's a great promise. Throughout the Old Testament, God dwelled among his people, but in a very unique way.

And he was unapproachable even as he dwells among them. Remember Sinai, when God appeared to them, they were fearful and rightly so. And throughout the Old Testament, God dwelled among his people, but there was a something.

We hear God promises, the triune God promises, that he will dwell with you, in you. I don't want us to overlook that promise of Jesus in these verses.

Note, but note there, the inseparable connection. There's an inseparable connection between being spirit-filled and word-centered. Do you see it?

The spirit-filled church is a word-centered church. church. Because it's only those who love God's word, who keep his word, who obey his commandments, showing that they truly love God, bearing the fruit of love of God, that God promises to come and dwell with.

[12:53] The spirit-filled church is a word-centered church. We cannot claim to have the spirit of truth, which is the Holy Spirit, who proceeds from the Father and the Son, without guarding among us and in our own hearts, individually and as a church, without guarding and holding onto and treasuring and keeping the word of God.

The spirit-filled church is a word-centered church. It is the spirit of Christ that enables us to love and to keep his words in our hearts. So, Jesus continues in verse 24.

Whoever does not love me does not keep my words. And the word that you hear is not mine, Jesus says, but the Father who sent me. But the Father's who sent me. So, it says here that without the Holy Spirit, without the Holy Spirit, we cannot rightly grasp the word of God and we cannot keep it. Now, this isn't a matter of human effort. If you're reading this and you think, okay, that means that I just gotta grit my teeth and humanly strive to obey.

That's not what Jesus is saying here. Remember what Paul says, Jesus himself says in John 6, verse 63. It is the spirit that gives life. The flesh is no help at all.

[14:11] This thing that Jesus is saying here is empowered by the Holy Spirit himself. We are meant to see that verse 23 and 24 are descriptive rather than prescriptive.

You know what I mean by that? It's descriptive. It's describing those who are in Christ. That's what's going on in these verses. It's not telling you this is how you ought to do it so that God loves you.

He's saying this is what people who love God and obey his word look like.

It's describing to us what they look like. And those who are not those who are not in this camp who cannot keep his word verse 24 and those who do not truly love him you see that in verse 24 it says whoever does not love me does not keep my words and the word that you hear is not mine but the Father who sent me.

So there is there's a difference between those who love God who have the power of the Holy Spirit enabling them and those who are trying to do it by the power of the flesh.

Jesus says those people it will bear out that they do not truly love me because they will not be able to keep my words. Jesus continues in these verses as he comforts and reassures I also want us to see that Jesus is reassuring his disciples and us also in these words as he continues in verse 25 he says these things I have spoken to you that you to you while I am still with you verse 26 but the helper the Holy Spirit 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.

[16:00] So in these words Jesus shows us also that the word centered church the word centered church is an apostolic church.

Jesus guarantees to the apostles that his words to them which are words of life and words of truth will be brought to their remembrance. The Holy Spirit will do this.

The helper the paraclete this promise is for the apostles alone though. I want you to know that the 11 and the limited number that will join their ranks those who have seen the risen Lord and have been expressly commissioned to bear witness to him and to his gospel.

Those are the people Jesus is promising to reveal to lead into all truths. How do we know that? Look in verse 25. These things I have spoken to you while I am still with you.

Jesus is expressly now prior to this he has been talking to anyone who loves and obeys his words but here he is specifically directing these words to those who are there with him the apostles the 11 and he is saying the helper the Holy Spirit 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 this is the promise of our Lord this is the promise of our Lord the helper the Holy Spirit will complete and fill out and bring to remembrance everything I have spoken to you Jesus says to the apostles this promise is the promise to lead them into all truth this promise is for the authentic and authorized eyewitnesses of the gospel in this earthly ministry and we ought to take note of that because often times people read these passages and they think okay that means that anyone that means including us here can be led into all truth well God's truth has been revealed it's there now the Holy Spirit works in us remember that

[18:24] God promises Jesus has promised the Holy Spirit for all who love him and obey his words but the Holy Spirit as it's promised here in verse 26 is to reveal and to bring to remembrance all that Jesus has taught the apostles and it's a comforting thing for us as well because as you read it how is it you might wonder how is this promise if it is just for the 11 how is it a comfort for the rest of the church I always say the comfort to the rest of us then why should we have it it is a comfort because it assures us that the apostles upon whom the foundation of the church was laid once and for all that it assures us that the revelation that they've given and passed down is a full and accurate understanding of the truth of Jesus Christ that's the assurance for us as we put our faith and our trust in the words of the Holy Scriptures we can be assured that these are true and accurate words

God has promised to reveal to these apostles all the truth to bring to their remembrance and God the Holy Spirit has done the work of inspiring them to record all God's truth for our benefit so we can put our faith and our trust in the words that we received from them not only that they were also able as I said before they were able to actually record it so it means that we can trust what the Holy Spirit has done through these apostles in the New Testament which they wrote and it also means that we can trust the word of God in the Old Testament which they interpreted so it's not this word in verse 20 it says it's for their sake but it's also for ours it shows us that Jesus makes this promise for our sake so that we can be assured that the deposit of truth they left is trustworthy and reliable and it is so what does it what then does it mean for us to be an apostolic church we say this the word centered church is an apostolic what does it mean to be an apostolic church it doesn't mean that as some would say being an apostolic church it doesn't mean that there's a line of apostolic succession traced to the apostles as some would tell you right from we can trace the apostolic laying of hands to one of the twelve or one of the apostles given in the Bible

I don't think that's the point that Jesus is making here it doesn't also mean that some will come and tell you that well I'm a new apostle now you know report to themselves as an apostle so and so it doesn't mean that either the foundation has been laid we talked about this in Ephesians when we went through Ephesians the foundation has been laid it's not to be laid anymore but this is what it means it means that to be an apostolic church means that we hold people of God it means we hold unswervingly to the teaching of God's word that we have received in holy scriptures it means that we must hold to it we must guard it we must trust it as God's word to us and so it is we're also not permitted to act to it right an apostle can a new age apostle can come along and says well this is so and so God's word says no he can he can interpret

God's word he can rightly preach and proclaim and prosper as I'm doing now but there is nothing to add to God's word we must not add to it and we cannot omit from it either we are not permitted to do so we must not and we cannot if we do so we cease to be an apostolic church so that's what it means to be an apostolic church to trust the deposit of truth that has been given by God the Holy Spirit to the apostles and to hold on to it unswervingly so the Spirit-filled church is a word centered church the word centered church will be an apostolic church and then Jesus continues in verse 27 to 29 and he gives this comforting consoling words to us 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 am going away and I will come to you if you loved me you would have rejoiced because I am 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 in these verses we see that the apostolic church will also be a cruciform church that means that the church of Christ is cross shaped and cross proclaiming what do I mean by that it means that our proclamation is about the death resurrection ascension and life of God that is the gospel that we have to proclaim that is what it means to be an apostolic church that is cross shaped that is a cruciform church Jesus says here the peace I leave with you my peace I give to you look at the personal sort of possession of the peace the way [24 : 15] Jesus articulates it the peace we talked of here is the peace that was secured by Jesus on the cross that's the peace that Jesus is talking about here this is the peace that was long hoped for in the Old Testament and is now fulfilled in the new by his once for all atonement of our sins as the lamb who was slain this is the peace that Jesus is talking about this brothers and sisters in Christ is lasting peace this is true peace and it is given Jesus says I give it to you notice that we're not told Jesus doesn't say go and secure the peace or win the peace we're not like Mohammedans we'll try to convert people at the point of the sword that is not the peace that Christ offers here we're not

Judaizers like in the time of Paul in Galatians we'll try to have peace with God by perfectly keeping the law legalism that's not the peace that Jesus is offering here this peace is a gift of God he gives it to us because of what he has accomplished and secured on the cross and I think many Christians have bought into the lie that it depends on us to secure the peace of God or even to usher the peace of God in to the world it depends on us and our actions and our faithfulness that's not what Jesus says here he says here I've given you my peace it's done and I've given it to you I love what D.A.

Carson says concerning this peace and I quote he says at the individual level this peace secures composure in the midst of trouble and this peace dissolves fear this is the peace which garrisons our hearts and minds against the invasion of anxiety and this is the peace that rules in the hearts of God's people to maintain harmony amongst them look at the description there this peace gives us composure in the midst of trouble why do we need peace after all that means there's a presence of conflict and war and turmoil and that's why we need peace peace and so Jesus says this peace I've given to you it gives its composure in the midst of trouble it dissolves our fears there will be fear peace and courage goes end and end you don't need courage remember that Jesus often what is Jesus word this is the two refrains he often gives peace be unto you or do not be afraid those go end and end from the mouth of our Lord why because Jesus knows there will be conflicts and he says do not be afraid because there are things to fear you don't need to not be afraid if there is nothing to fear you don't need to be courageous if there is nothing really actually there's only you can only be courageous if you are fearful do you know that and so Jesus is comforting us here I've given you my peace it is yours I leave!

it with you I give it to you this peace will rule the hearts of God's people those who love God and obey his words this peace is theirs it reveals himself to those who love him and obey his commands and this peace is given to us by the Holy Spirit we cannot lose sight of that it is the Holy Spirit that illuminates God's word to us if you are a believer!

in Jesus Christ have you found that when you come to know Jesus and you love him you read his word and it comes alive to you maybe you were a Christian maybe like me you were a Christian you you've always been like you born into a Christian family but all of a sudden you're like reading this word and now it means something to you it's!

[28 : 31] alive! in you that's the work with phds who know the original Greek and Hebrew and are pagans and don't believe in Jesus Christ do you think it's because you're smarter than them or something there's another secret there's the only one secret is the Holy Spirit it is the Holy Spirit that gives insight into God's word so that we can rightly understand it and as John says the end of his gospel so that we can come to believe it's not just sort of mental intellectual ascent but we can come to believe with art mind and soul in God's word so I want to bring before us Jesus Christ in these verses he reveals himself to those who love him and obey his commands in his word by the Holy Spirit I want to bring to us two things especially the work of Jesus and the person of Jesus the person of Jesus is that he is the one that has promised not to abandon us do you see that in these verses he promised not to abandon you he is our advocate!

in heaven and he gives! he gives us another advocate which is the holy spirit the helper not only that he gives us peace he reveals himself to us that's the person of Jesus!

!! he died and rose again and because he died and rose though we die we will also rise that is the promise that's what Eastertide reminds us of during this time of Easter even these words of our Lord even as he said this to them before he goes to the cross but they're meant to be comforting because now we are on the vantage point of seeing what Christ has wrought on the cross and in his vindication by his resurrection because Jesus lives now even now we have a new life in him do you know that brothers and sisters in Christ this new life is different from anything that the world can offer you it's a life of true freedom and because Jesus ascended to heaven you and I who have come to love him and obey his words he gives us the

Holy Spirit you have God the Holy Spirit as your helper as your advocate in closing I want to offer these three words it's a word of invitation a word of confrontation and a word of consolation to you this is the invitation come and love Jesus come and love him and obey his commands if you're here this morning and you are not those he's described yet those who he have come to love him and obey his words and have the Holy Spirit living the triune God making his home in you dwelling with you if you're here you don't know what that means I invite you this morning come come and love him and obey his commands come and know his peace which transcends all understanding and here's a word of confrontation for those of us who have come to

Jesus and know him stop redefining and limiting his words we know what it means to be in Christ we know what it means to have the Holy Spirit but sometimes the world comes with its different ideologies and and and and and different wars and we're tempted to redefine either to accommodate or to you know to take it upon ourselves to fight for God to bring about his peace well this is a word of confrontation for us in these verses stop redefining and limiting God's word what we are to do is to obey his commands to trust him and to love him and remember last week this is how the world knows we are his by our love this is how we proclaim the gospel of

[33 : 31] Jesus Christ in the way we love God and love one another and here's a word of consolation for you brothers and sisters in Christ be comforted that Jesus and the father love you and have come to dwell in you what a comfort this is I think this one thing that Peter alludes to in his epistles prophets of old testament and angels longed to look into these mysteries that God the father son and holy spirit by the power of the holy spirit have come to make their homes in the hearts of sinful human beings we've become God's temple because of what Christ has secured for us and what the holy spirit appropriates to us be comforted by this knowledge that Jesus and the father have come to make their home with you!

because of Jesus' work for you you've been brought into an intimate family relationship with the triune God what else do you need?

What else can you want? What other peace or assurance can you long for in this world? What beats what Jesus has accomplished and given to you?

And if there is nothing then rest in his peace which he gives to all who love it rest let us pray