

Help From The Father

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[0:00] Well, this past week, my kids approached me, several of them, and asked for help.

! One asked for help with math. Now, the first that asked for help was help with reading, my little seven-year-old.

And I can handle that, and I enjoy that. Here's kind of a look at some of the things that we were reading. Bill and Sam are in a mess.

A man from the mill yells at Bill and Sam. I can handle that. I can help him get through those words. That was manageable.

And my daughter, who is eight, also asked for help. She asked for help with spelling. And here's what I had to anticipate with helping with spelling. Hold, mild, post, mind, sold.

[1:17] I got that one. I can handle that one. Yes, I can be a resource for help for those words. But then I had a daughter who asked for help with math.

Let's see this one. Eight cosine theta minus four, the square root of three equals zero. Please put your answer in radians. Let's just say we all need help with this one.

Now, I have a little bit of background in math, being an engineer. And having gone through, you know, pre-calculus and calc one, two, and three, and differential equations in college.

But I had to kind of knock off the cobwebs and clear some space for 20 years of not having accessed this kind of information before.

And so it took some time to figure out how in the world to even begin with an equation like this.

Now, for some of you, perhaps, out there, eight cosine theta minus four, the square root of three equals zero is just like elementary reading.

[2:34] Bill and Sam are in a mess. But for the rest of us, this is a difficult and challenging scenario, one that not only makes us scratch our head and think, where do I begin?

But then we begin to understand that we are people who really do need help. Now, as I think about the help that we each have access to, the help that Jesus had been talking about through these chapters of the Gospel of John, in John chapter 13, 14, 15, and 16, and we'll get to chapter 16 this morning, he informs us that there is a helper.

He talks about it over and over and over again. We see it five times in this short piece of time that Jesus is spending with them.

And I'll put those up there on the screen for you to see. Five times, Jesus refers to the helper, the helper that they have access to.

These disciples have help. Now, the problem for us, maybe the biggest hurdle that keeps us from experiencing help is we just don't think we need help.

[4:01] We think we have things under control. And as a matter of fact, when we don't have things under control, we make sure that we arrange the circumstances and manage the conflicts so that eventually we can control the situation.

Or we avoid the risky aspects of life. We avoid the things in life that require us to need help. And so because we don't need help, we don't get help.

And because we don't need help, we don't experience the wonder of the Holy Spirit working in our life. We never come to really know that the Spirit is there for help.

Divine help. Godly help. Risk-taking. God-sized strength is at your fingertips.

It's accessible to you. And this morning, I want not to compare the cosine theta to the help of the Holy Spirit.

[5:20] They're in different stratospheres. But I want you to understand that there is help for you in the mission that God has for your life. And certainly Jesus wanted his disciples to understand that the mission that he was about to send them on was an impossible mission for them to handle on

their own.

They would fall flat on their face without the help of the Holy Spirit. But with the strengthening, enabling help of God working in their life, they would be able not only to meet the objectives that God had called them to meet, to fulfill the purposes that God had called them to fulfill, but they would move to the places that would be beyond their comprehension with the help of the Holy Spirit working in their life.

The same Holy Spirit that worked in the person of Jesus to accomplish miracles and to cast out demons and to calm the storm and to heal lepers and to distribute bread and fish is the same Spirit that works in you today.

Imagine. Imagine this morning. Imagine this morning.

and allow him to do the work. As we recognize our need for divine help and as we ask for his help to flourish in our life.

[7:23] Have you applied yourself to the task? Are you enabled by his strength this morning? When you show up in your workplace tomorrow, will people see, have they taken notice that there is something distinctive about you?

because the Spirit is working in your life, setting you apart, making your job and your work look different from everyone else?

In your behavior, in the way that you apply yourself to the task, in your attitude, in your submission to your employer? That's the work of the Spirit.

That's the work of the Spirit. And that's what he will accomplish for you. I want to look at the help of the Spirit, the help from the Father that he has given to us this morning.

And I want to look at these last five scenarios, these last five statements that Jesus makes about the Holy Spirit, the helper in our life, and what the helper has come to do.

[8:27] How does the helper help you? Well, first of all, in verses 26 at the end of chapter 15, we're going to pick up where we left off last week, to chapter 16, verse 4, we recognize that the Spirit is there to help to confirm your witness.

The Spirit helps to confirm your witness. That is point number one. Let me read these verses for us, and then we'll dig into the text. Beginning in verse 26, But when the helper comes, whom I will send to you from the Father, the Spirit of truth, who proceeds from the Father, he will bear witness about me.

And you also will bear witness, because you have been with me from the beginning. I have said all these things to you, to keep you from falling away. They will put you out of the synagogues.

Indeed, the hour is coming, when whoever kills you will think he is offering service to God. And they will do these things, because they have not known the Father, nor me.

But I have said these things to you, that when their hour comes, you may remember that I told them to you. I did not say these things to you from the beginning, because I was with you.

[9:50] We saw last week that the Holy Spirit's primary ministry to the world is a ministry of testifying about Christ.

It's a ministry of making Christ known to the world. The Spirit bears witness about me, Jesus says, and you will bear witness about me.

When the Spirit is in your life, the Spirit will do the job of testifying to the Father, and to Jesus. And so as you live out your life, your life will be a testimony, a reflection of Jesus.

He will show up in the way that you speak, in the way that you behave, in the words that you use, and in the way that you say those words. We also saw last week that the work of the Holy Spirit is clearest in times of persecution.

Light shines brightest in the darkest night. In the midst of persecution, your light will be the most radiant.

[10:58] And that's when the Spirit loves to do His work. The Spirit loves to do His work in the midst of your weakness to help magnify the strength of God. There's a picture that Jesus is giving to His disciples as He moves them through these final hours.

He wants them to understand that there is a public proclamation. That when you bear testimony of Jesus, it's going to show up in the words you say, but also show up in the works that you do.

As in Jesus' life, His miracles gave testimony and affirmed and validated the words that came from the Father. It demonstrated that He was authentic, that He was genuine, that things that He was saying were true and right.

And when we give testimony to Jesus, we echo the things that Jesus says about Himself. We echo that He is the way, the truth, and the life.

We echo that He is the resurrection and the life. He's the door. He's the light of the world. He's the good shepherd. He's the vine. He is the bread of life.

[12:17] All of these things that Jesus says about Himself, our life is a reflection of that reality. We show that Jesus as the bread of life is sufficient.

He nourishes our heart. Jesus as the vine, we've seen He's the one that we abide in fellowship with Him. We enjoy and are satisfied with Him alone.

There is a witness of works that shows up in our life. And it requires divine help in order for us to show properly.

Now moving to verses 1 through 4, we see some of the details. Jesus wants His disciples to understand that they're going to encounter some pushback, some opposition, antagonism from the world.

And He gives them some specifics. What can you expect? You're going to need help. Excuse me, Jesus says. Take a drink.

[13:24] You're going to need help. But you've been given divine power. You're able to make your way through the conflict because I have given you strength.

I've given you divine energy. I've given you the Holy Spirit who can help you to overcome the opposition, to stand in the face of turmoil.

Jesus recounts several scenarios that they will come to bear on their life. And He talks about the significance of not falling away. This word here in verse 1 of falling away is the word scandalizo, which, as you can tell, is our English equivalent to scandalize.

It is speaking of a trap or an animal. The little stick in the trap, you see the box in the comics and you pull the stick and the box falls down.

The scandalon was the stick that supported the trap. He didn't want them to encounter the trap that comes when hard things confront us.

[14:39] He didn't want them to be like an animal that was ensnared in a trap. Jesus was going to eliminate the surprise by telling them ahead of time what to expect.

One commentator puts it this way, the greatest danger the disciples will confront from the opposition of the world was not death but apostasy.

It was not death but apostasy. Jesus puts it this way in Luke chapter 12. He says, My friends, do not be afraid of those who kill the body and after that have no more they can do, but I will show you whom you should fear.

Fear him who after he is killed has power to cast into hell. Yes, I say to you, fear him. And Jesus later on begins to expound.

It says, You will be hated by all by my name's sake, but he who endures to the end will be saved.

The true follower of Christ, the true disciple of Christ will be the individual who makes it to the finish line, who does not fall away, but who endures through times of difficulty, who stands the test of time, who demonstrates the power of the Spirit working in their life to endure whatever conflict, whatever hardship that they will be confronted with.

[16:08] They demonstrate that the Spirit is working in their life. But Jesus wants his disciples not to be caught off guard. Don't be surprised.

Hardship is coming. And what makes this hardship particularly difficult is that in both of the examples that Jesus gives here, they both involve opposition, not that comes from the world, but opposition that comes from the religious.

Look at this. They will put you out of the synagogue, he says in verse 2. He says in verse 3, they will do these things because they have not known the Father.

They will think that they're offering sacrifices to God, he says at the end of verse 2. These are individuals who have some level of spirituality, and yet they oppose you.

Now we can expect that opposition will come from the world. We can sort of anticipate that, but when it comes from within the church, or when it comes from religious individuals, that's when it becomes hard to understand.

[17:24] John, in dealing with the same issue, in 1 John, he's writing a letter to the church of Ephesus, and he wants the church who has remained to understand that the folks who have left demonstrate that they really weren't a part of God in the first place.

Jesus is dealing with the same issue here. He wants his disciples to understand that the opposition that comes from the people who are least expected might perhaps be the most confusing and hard for us to decipher.

How can this happen from people within the church? But MacArthur puts it this way. He says, when I came out of seminary, I knew I would be fighting battles on issues such as inerrancy and inspiration, the authority of Scripture and sanctification, but I never really believed that I would spend so much of my ministry trying to defend the gospel inside the church.

From the very beginning of my ministry, I was aware that the churches were full of people who didn't understand the gospel. Sometimes it's alarming and confusing when opposition comes, from people who you would expect to be the representatives of God's word, even leaders within a church.

Jesus wants to make them aware that this is a certainty. This will happen. Don't be caught off guard. And this was the disciples' experience.

[19:17] People from within their own nation. People from within their own community. People who were put in positions of leadership put them out of the synagogue, put them out of the temple, and Paul himself, as being the major proponent of it at the early part of the Exodus from Jerusalem, thought he was doing a service to God by persecuting the church within Jerusalem.

The greatest hurdle, as I've said, to getting help is knowing that we need it. And perhaps the greatest reason why we don't understand our need for help is because we never have a testimony, we never bear the kind of testimony in the world that is distinctive enough to receive opposition. I think of our witness as students, and I think of the compromise that many of the students within this church probably go through.

Temptation to cheat or to plagiarize. Temptation to do work for a friend. Temptation to criticize authority. Temptation to be part of the bullying that takes place so often within the school system. Temptation to ignore students who are kind of outcasts. But God has called us to something distinctive. He has called us to something better. He has called us to operate within the power of the Spirit to demonstrate the love of God in the world.

[20:55] Or how about the workplace? The compromise to fudge a little on your numbers or to cut corners in your work. The temptation to undermine your boss or another employee.

to do whatever it takes to get ahead. To have that cutthroat strategy that is the proven strategy to get that promotion. So we adopt the world's strategies and we don't look distinctive.

And because we don't look distinctive we demonstrate that we are taking matters into our hands instead of leaning and resting in the power of the Spirit to do a work in our life.

Imagine a life empowered by the Spirit today. You're going to need help but Jesus has given His divine helper to help you in the situation whatever that situation might be.

As a student as a mom as a dad as an employee wherever you may be Jesus wants you to be a witness and He has given His help to confirm that witness in your life to strengthen and magnify Himself through your life through the witness of Christ who has transformed you.

[22:19] Secondly we see that Jesus is also given help by the Spirit to convict the world of sin. Help to convict the world. We see that in verses 5 to 11.

Let me read that for us. Jesus says but now I am going to Him who sent me and none of you asks me where are you going but because I have said these things to you sorrow has filled your heart. Nevertheless I tell you the truth it is to your advantage that I go away for if I do not go away the helper will not come to you but if I go I will send Him to you and when He comes He will convict the world concerning sin and righteousness and judgment concerning sin because they do not believe in me concerning righteousness because I go to the Father and you will see me no longer concerning judgment because the ruler of this world is judged you have a helper given to assist you in making much of Jesus in this world of making the gospel clear in this world when Jesus talks about this word of convicting He is talking about the word reveal He is talking about to expose He is talking about to make light of we are going to get to this in just a moment but just because someone's life is exposed does not mean they automatically are converted

Jesus wants His disciples to understand you are not alone in making much of me you are not alone in exalting Jesus the name of Jesus in the public you will have help and the Spirit will convict the world but before He does He lets them know that something has to happen first before He can send the Spirit to them He must first go away He says now I go away to Him who sent me Jesus has said this at least three other times in His conversation this night with the disciples and then He makes an

interesting statement He says in no one asks me where I am going but sorrow has filled your heart now if you are remembering this narrative and you have read through chapters 13 to 16 recently you might be scratching your head and wondering but wait a second

Peter asked you specifically where you are going at the end of chapter 13 and Philip asked you where you are going at the beginning of chapter 14 what are you talking about Jesus none of you has asked me where I am going what Jesus is referring to is not the kind of question that at the surface seems to have some interest what Jesus is talking about is the kind of question that is penetrating and is concerned about the individual that they are asking about it is kind of like a dad who has promised his son hey on Saturday we are going to go fishing well Saturday comes and dad gets a call from work that says there is an emergency meeting there is things that need to happen and then he packs up his briefcase and walks out the door and the son says where are you going but the son has little concern about what the father is actually doing and more concern about how the father's decision affects him personally that is what

[26:06] Jesus is talking about Jesus understands that at the heart of the questions that they were asking initially had more to do with their inconvenience and less to do with the implications that were coming so Jesus takes this opportunity to say I know that you understand that something radical is going to take place I know that you kind of get it that I'm going to be leaving you may not understand all that's going to unfold here in the next few hours as we read throughout the gospels that although Jesus had told them on at least three occasions that he was going to die and he was going to be handed over and that he was going to rise again it says that they still did not understand the saying it was hidden from them so they didn't understand that Jesus was going to die but they did kind of get it that he was going to leave and so confusion and sorrow filled their heart but Jesus wants to turn them from sorrow and grief to rejoicing because it is not until or unless he leaves that the

Holy Spirit can show up in their life as we see in verse 7 it is to your advantage that I go away then the helper will come Jesus wanted them to understand that his departure was actually a cause for rejoicing not for sorrow because in his leaving there would follow a sending a sending and a helping from the Holy Spirit that was a mind bending truth they weren't going to grasp that evening but they would come to understand it later the Spirit he's going to come and not only come as we find in chapter 14 verse 17 look at this with me for a second not only would he come but we find at the latter end of verse 17 you know him for he dwells with you and he will be in you significant change was going to take place instead of the Spirit of God resting on a life empowering a life now because of

Christ finished work on the cross and his resurrection there would be now an indwelling of the Spirit in their life it wasn't that the Holy Spirit and Jesus can't occupy the same space but it was that the Holy Spirit could only come and could indwell a life once Jesus had finished his work of redemption on the cross and it was through the Spirit's indwelling that now incarnation would happen in a different way it would not happen through the person of Christ but it would happen through the body of Christ his bride the church so that wherever the church is wherever a believer is filled with the Spirit there is a representation a likeness to Jesus there is a shining light of Christ that can radiate this world in its transcendence through the church and through the Spirit's work and when he comes we find his threefold ministry here in these verses verse 8 when he comes he will convict the world concerning sin concerning righteousness and concerning judgment notice how each of these point to

Christ the Spirit who testifies to Jesus will put on display the wonder of Christ's work that will expose sin sin that fundamentally is not believing in Jesus as Jesus says here in verse 9 concerning sin because they do not believe in me every sin that we commit is due to a deficiency of faith in God we believe that our way is a better way we believe that our way is an easier way we believe that our way is a happier way that our way avoids the unwanted pressures that we face and in taking matters into our hands our lack of faith in Christ leads us to sin but the Spirit has come to expose that sin he exposes the righteousness of Jesus as well as Jesus goes to the

Father a representation of the fact that the work that Christ did on the earth was accepted by the Father the work that Christ did fulfilled the standards of the Father that Jesus was the picture of righteousness the completion of the law the only one who could measure up to the standard of God and in that it helps to expose the inadequacy of the righteousness in our life as the Sermon on the Mount so clearly helps us with Jesus takes the Old Testament law and demonstrates that what we

think to be the standard of morality is so much deeper he says you have heard it said you shall not murder but I say to you that everyone who is angry with his brother is liable of judgment he says you have heard it said love your neighbor and hate your enemy but I say to you love your enemies and pray for those who persecute you

[32 : 23] Jesus took the Old Testament standards and demonstrated what true righteousness looked like not just following the letter of the law but it went much deeper to the heart and exposed the rottenness of our soul and the spirit comes to convict the world of judgment because the ruler of this world is judged it says in verse 11 those who abide in Christ as we've seen in previous verses will experience the joy of being with Christ and with the father but those who align themselves to the world will experience the judgment that comes on the devil and those who follow the devil's footsteps who are not abiding in Christ will also experience the judgment of God there is a lawgiver there is a standard and there will be judgment and the spirit comes to help expose those things in a heart and in a life he makes the gospel clear he makes

Jesus clear in the eyes of the world and we entrust the gospel to the spirit to work in a life of those who hear not only to make it clear but to draw them to affection for the savior and finally we come to verses 12 to 15 we see here that there is help to clarify the word help to clarify the word verse 12 says this 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 truth for he will not speak on his own authority but whatever he hears he speaks 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 it to you all that the father has is mine therefore

I said that that he will take what is mine and declare it to you we read these verses and it's almost unimaginable that in three years of ministry in Jesus speaking and teaching and preaching to the masses and interacting with the disciples in private that there were still more things for Jesus to distribute in terms of teaching to these men and yet they were weighty things they were difficult things things that were beyond their ability to comprehend and beyond their ability to really process in these moments but the spirit would guide them into all truth the spirit would speak the things about Christ he would remind them about the things that Jesus said and did that would be a testimony to them of God's standard for their life in future ministry but we find that he would also tell them things to come he would give them more information to help them appreciate what God to do God to do to do! What would they do to deal with the growing numbers in the church? Well in Acts chapter 6 we see that they elected deacons to help minister to people who were hurting and people who had need well what would they do when persecution hit when the city of Jerusalem was under opposition well they would move to the regions beyond Jerusalem into Samaria and Judea and the uttermost parts of the world what would they do when the Gentiles were converted what would they do about circumcision what would they do about leadership structure within the church well the spirit would inform them about Jesus and help them to understand how to deal with those specific issues they could lean on the spirit's help to direct them in their understanding as we think about our own lives we understand that the spirit wants to do the same work he wants to lead us in our discovery of

[36 : 58] Jesus in our appreciation of who he is as we find in verse 14 he will glorify me the message from the spirit will be a message that exalts Christ are you finding in your life that there is a deeper affection for Jesus day by day are you finding in your life a passion to know him more is there in your heart a zeal to study the scriptures and daily be moving in maturity and understanding and appreciation for who he is I wonder if the reason why we don't experience the spirit's power in our life is because those things are kind of put on the back burner they're not so important yes we might read the scriptures but when it comes to really digging in and asking difficult questions it's so much easier just to pick up a resource of what somebody else has said about a passage than it is for us to do the hard work ourselves asking good questions and asking

God to help us make be more aware of human life when you experience hard things when people are mean do you realize that God allows those things to happen to deepen your appreciation of him your experience with him and that his Holy Spirit is there to help you in those hard times so that you can glorify him through those difficulties is there an affection for Christ that surpasses every other joy those who are helped by the Spirit will see Jesus for who he is they will long for deeper knowledge of him that comes through the assistance of the Spirit imagine this week what life might be like if the

Spirit showed up in your witness imagine how the world might be able to see how wonderful the Spirit is when he sees husbands and wives who love each other the way God has designed for them to love each other in spite of not being treated fairly in spite of not being respected in spite of not being appreciated there is commitment and help by the Spirit to be a witness in the world even through the context of your home imagine imagine what life would be like if the Spirit was helping you in your gospel witness to show Christ in the world if your life showed the sweetness of Jesus and helped to expose the sin and the righteousness and the judgment of God imagine what your life would be like this week if God gave you a deeper affection for him in the word and that the Spirit informed your mind and informed your heart and drew you in to a deeper richer more satisfying relationship with Christ this week that's what the Spirit wants to do that's what Christ wants for your life and that's why he's given his spirit to indwell you for this life's journey let's pray Lord we thank you this morning for the spirit spirit that you give us in this life to overcome our tendencies to overcome our frailties and to help us show the wonder of Jesus in this world that shows up in so many different contexts! Lord I pray that our lives would show the radiant witness of Christ in this world they would show that you are satisfying that you are truly wonderful Lord I pray for your church this week everyone who is here Lord I pray that there would be a renewed devotion to making much of you in our lives so that we can see the power of God working through us so that we can come to terms with the fact that we need help because we have a big monumental task ahead of us this is not to put us on display but to put you on display to make you look glorious in this world so show up for us this week and help us to commit ourselves to asking the help of the spirit to take place we pray in
[42 : 44] Jesus name amen