

# John 14:15-31 Early Morning

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[ 0 : 00 ] If you will, reach for your Bible again and turn to this great gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ according to John, in this magnificent chapter 14, which we start in verse 15 and not verse 1, and you may be more familiar with where it starts than where we begin today.

Verse 1 is, It's a classic funeral text, that one is.

But this one that we're looking at today, you see the title there, Jesus Promises the Holy Spirit. So we're in a series here at St. John's called The Story of God, and it's in three parts.

First, the first part of three was The God Who Speaks. We're in the section now in the middle, which is The God Who Dwells, and then we'll finish up with The God Who Reigns.

But last week's message was on The God Who Dwells. And we learned about The God Who Saves by dwelling in us.

[ 1 : 20 ] But today we're going to learn about The God Who Fills us, and therefore dwells that way in this story by the Holy Spirit. So today it first seems like it's about the Holy Spirit.

And there's no doubt that the chapter, the section, beginning with the 15th verse is. But it's very much about the whole or the Holy Trinity. So this morning my synthesis is this.

Christian life is about the Spirit through the love of Jesus, who is loved by the Father. So that the world will know Christians love Jesus because of his compelling love for the Father.

And it's a mouthful, I know. But to that end, I want us to see this, beginning with the 15th verse for these 16 verses.

And that is the manifestation of Jesus, the ministry of the Holy Spirit, and then the mission of the Father. So first, the manifestation of Jesus. There is a question in this text.

[ 2 : 26 ] I don't know if you noticed it, but it was issued by Judas, not Iscariot. But he said, Lord, how is it that you will manifest yourself to us and not to the world?

Now we're in the season of Epiphany, which is between Christmas and Lent, I know. And you do too. But this word manifest is quite significant.

Judas issues this question. Jesus actually gives a response and uses this word manifest. And so it features significantly in this season, but also it's kind of central in this text.

And Jesus begins this final discourse in the upper room with a conditional promise. It's actually in not verse 15, but verse 14.

And he says, if you love me, you will keep my commandments. And the verse immediately preceding it is, if you ask me anything in my name, I will do it. And so this is what he wants us to ask of him and what he actually wants us to do is to love him.

[ 3 : 29 ] And when we do that, we'll keep his commandments. So what is it that Jesus wants from us? Well, as it said here, to keep these commandments. Yes, the Big Ten Commandments and all he has commanded in this whole of the gospel of John.

That is the key to him doing what we ask in his name. That's the key. And when we keep his commandments and ask anything in his name, Jesus is manifest and it is done.

That is, it's manifest. It's exhibited. It's disclosed. It's visible. Jesus, full on for us to see who he is.

So Jesus' answer to Judas and us is, if anyone loves me, he'll keep my word. And my father will love him or her.

And we will come to him and make our home within him. Keeping Jesus' commandments and word. I don't know if you know this.

[ 4 : 33 ] This has been your experience. But it's like it's next to impossible. But possible, if in both cases, keeping his commandment and his words, we love Jesus.

And this makes Christianity unique of all the religions and spiritualities. Our primary practice and discipline is to love Jesus.

Christianity isn't legalism, but it's love. Jesus' commands and words are for keeping, preserving, obeying, but only by his love for us so that we can love him.

And when we do, Jesus has manifest himself to us so that we can. So that's the manifestation of Jesus. How do we do this love, though?

We can't do it on our own. We need all the help we can get. And this is not about self-help then. And so, question, have you ever tried to love Jesus, that is, keep his commands and obey his word, by your own strength, will, or grit?

[ 5 : 47 ] Fortunately, Jesus shows us here we have a helper and a teacher. Did you see that in Jesus' discourse with his disciples? Well, it doesn't say that we just have a helper.

Jesus actually says that we have, or he has for us, another helper. That is, a helper like him. Just like him, though different.

Verse 15 to 17 reads, And I will ask the Father, and he will give you another helper to be with you forever, even the spirit of truth.

There is a way to love Jesus, keeping his commandments, preserving his word, the way, the truth, and the life of this matter is the Holy Spirit.

Except Jesus doesn't call him the Holy Spirit first. He just calls him the helper. And we need all the help we can get to fulfill and follow Jesus.

[ 6 : 54 ] And not just any help, but another helper just like him. And the disciples then and now know that Jesus helps for sure. But this other helper, the Holy Spirit, like Jesus, meets our greatest need as he comes alongside of us.

He's actually within us, dwelling there. This helper defends, comforts, guides, graces us, because he's given.

It's God's grace. And with us. And in us. In other words, he dwells and fills us. And Jesus is not just talking about this Holy Spirit's kind of there or around us, but inhabits us, possesses, empowers, is within us.

So that we can love Jesus, who loves and lives in us by his Spirit. That helper. That teacher. Now, I fail to appreciate this.

I hope it's not true of you. But it was brought to my attention just this past week when I went to visit Tannis Matheson. And I know that most of you will remember Tannis, who used to sit kind of right over here.

[ 8 : 11 ] Yeah. Right. Right there where Leonard's sitting. You're filling her space, Leonard. Hmm. When I went to visit her in her home, and I had been visiting her hospital, the first thing that came out of her mouth was David's sermon was great last week.

And I said to her, what was great about it? She said, it was just what everyone needs to hear, but especially me. Because Satan is right there.

I said to her, I know. He pulls out all the stops when we're at the end stage of our life. He tries to condemn us. But she said, I know that Jesus is with me too.

I asked her what Satan was accusing her of. She shared with me that. I won't share that with you. Boy, oh boy, do we ever need the help of the Holy Spirit to remind us that Jesus is with us.

Of course, the beginning and the very end, but all the way through. When we first believe, when we take our last breath, we need the help, the defense, the comfort of the spirit of truth all the way out through our life, and especially as it comes to the end.

[ 9 : 36 ] So I prayed with Janice, and she died an hour later. This is the Holy Spirit, who Jesus says then, the world cannot receive, because it neither sees him nor knows him.

You know him. And then Jesus says, for he dwells with you and will be with you. What a great promise. Important word there is dwell, but the operative word might be no.

And in the gospel of John, throughout it, so that we might believe, and Jesus talks about this here, and of course at the beginning of the chapter, but now I think the word is no. That is not N-O, but K-N-O-W.

With the help of the spirit of truth, we can know, and be assured, or certain, or convinced, of the Holy Spirit, and Jesus' power, and presence with us.

And this is the ministry of the helper. That is the spirit, the Holy Spirit. Finally then, the mission of the father. The word father appears in this text ten times in these sixteen verses, compared to the two times that the word spirit appears.

[ 10 : 52 ] That doesn't make the father more important than the spirit. However, I've never noticed before this week how prominent the father is in this discourse. And in these verses, Jesus says things like, the father who sent me, or I will go to the father, or the father will send, that is the spirit, in my name.

And the father isn't a missionary board, or missionary committee, though I'm very thankful for those, especially here at St. John's, but the father is at heart committed to mission.

And he sends his son with a mission throughout the Gospel of John. And the spirit, both helper and teacher, is sent in the son's name by the father.

What about this missional father, then? It all sounds very functional and formal, maybe even kind of hierarchical. After all, Jesus tells us in verse 28, I am going to the father, for the father is greater than I.

What is most notable about the mission of the father, sending the son, and the spirit, in Jesus' name, is actually the love between the three persons of the Holy Trinity here.

[ 12 : 03 ] Did you notice also how often the word love launches from the lips of Jesus? If you were counting, it was ten times.

And so no wonder someone like Augustine of Hippo described this community as one of love, this kind of concept of love, the contemplation of love, and then the love of this idea, but not just an idea of a person.

Or Jonathan Edwards thought that the love between the three persons of the Trinity were similar to this with the intellect, the will, and the emotions or the affections that the three had for one another and still do and always will, which is why their love proceeds from them to us.

Well, the desire of Jesus is not that we know this love of the Father for the Son, the Holy Spirit. That is, sorry, what the desire is.

And so he says, in 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.

[ 13 : 15 ] And he who loves me will be loved by my Father. And I will love him and manifest myself to him. Jesus longs that we not only love the Son, but know we are loved by the Father and the Son.

So before Jesus rises from the upper room, prays in the Garden of Gethsemane, betrayed by Judas, and dies on the cross, which is an act of love and sacrifice, Jesus then states the purpose, the outcome of this mission of love.

Verse 29, And now I have told you before it takes place, so that when it does take place, you may believe. I'll no longer talk much with you, for the ruler of this world is coming.

He has no claim on me, but I do as the Father has commanded me, so that the world may know that I love the Father.

The purpose of this mission, by way of the Father, and conceived by him as one of love, so that, one, we believe, and two, know that Jesus loves the Father.

[ 14 : 35 ] that's what Jesus wants us to be captivated by. If we want to love the Father so that we can keep the commandments and his word, we look to the Son who gives us the Spirit to dwell in us so that we're in him and he's in us so that we can fulfill that which he calls us and commands us, compels us to do.

So, this is the ministry and the mission and the manifestation of the Trinity.

All very much about love, deeply relational. And so, I close with the words of Jesus in chapter 14.

And he says this. It's just a promise, but a big one, I think. It says, 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. Same words in verse 14, sorry, verse 1, chapter 14.

[ 15 : 52 ] Let not your hearts be troubled, believe in God, believe also in me. And when we do, we have this peace that Jesus promises. It's a profound one.

The world that we live in may try to promise something of a peace. Good luck trying to do that without Jesus. But this is the one that he promises.

And that's why the Father sent his Son. And that's why the Father and the Son give us the Spirit to dwell, to help, to teach, to defend, to comfort, to advocate.

He's in me. He's in you. May we grow in that grace and that knowledge as he empowers us for service to one another and to him and to others and for his glory.

We speak to you in the name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit. Amen.