

Never Alone Again // John 14:15-23

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[0:00] The following message was given by Walt Alexander, pastor at Trinity Grace Church in Athens, Tennessee. For more information about Trinity Grace, please visit us at TrinityGraceAthens.com.

So John 14, I'm going to read the word. I'll say this is the word of the Lord after I'm done. You'll say thanks be to God. So please do stand for the reading of the scriptures.

John 14, verse 15. And this is our Lord. You know him, for he dwells with you and will be in you. This is the word of the Lord. Hallelujah. Please be seated. There's a popular poem written about 40 or 50 years ago called Footprints.

You've likely heard of the poem. It's the story of a believer who had a dream that he was walking along the beach. In many ways, he envisioned that his whole life was walking along this beach.

[1:31] As he looked back over his life, he saw two sets of footprints walking along the beach. They were his footprints. The other set of footprints were the Lord's footprints.

He was refreshed and reminded how God had been with him. God was with him and would never leave him. But during the most difficult period of his life, he said, in the dream, he saw only one pair of footprints.

Now he was confused. Was not God with him in the hard times? Is that why he felt so alone in those hard moments? He asked the Lord and the Lord said, Those hard days, I didn't walk beside you. I carried you.

And that's why the poem sold millions of copies, even though it's anonymous. Now you may find the poem beautiful, or you may find it a bit too cheesy, a little too Cracker Barrel for your taste.

But my concern is that the poem is lacking something vital. The poem fails to make clear why we can be certain that God is with us. The poem makes no mention of the Holy Spirit.

[2:48] God has revealed himself in scriptures as the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. Yet it appears that the Spirit is largely forgotten. Francis Chan wasn't the first to call the Holy Spirit the forgotten God.

Now don't get me wrong. Some churches talk about the Spirit all the time and all the gifts of the Spirit. But among many churches, the Holy Spirit almost appears to be never talked about at all. Or if he is talked about, he's talked about with hushed tones, like you might talk about, a crazy uncle. Like, yes, that's Uncle Bob.

He's here. He's special. But don't worry. If you don't mess with him, he won't mess with you, or something like that. And you know, perhaps the reason is because the Father and Son are familiar categories for us.

But who knows what a Spirit is? Or after all, the Holy Ghost, as we just sang. Yet the Holy Spirit in the New Testament is the supreme and crowning blessing of the Gospel.

[3:56] The Gospel unveils to us God the Father, who in His great love gives us everything He has. First, His Son to die for us. And then His Spirit to live within us.

Our desire is that we would be a church that pursues the fullness of the Holy Spirit. That we would live in a conscious dependence upon and active pursuit of the presence of the Holy Spirit.

Now, last week we concluded 1 Corinthians 11. So that's 23 sermons into this book. And the only thing I can think is that we're going too fast. You might be thinking too slow.

Chapter 12 begins the longest section on spiritual gifts in all of the New Testament. And yet John 14 through 17 is the longest section on the person of the Holy Spirit.

So before we proceed into discussing spiritual gifts and asking all our burning questions about tongues and prophecy and things like that, we wanted to step back to consider the gift of the Holy Spirit, the person of the Holy Spirit.

[5:08] So this morning we're turning our attention to John 14 through 16. This is, in fact, what we talked about last week. The Lord's Supper was, the institution of the Lord's Supper was on the night the Lord was betrayed.

And so too, these chapters are on the night he was betrayed. So he's talking to his disciples at the Last Supper. And he's telling his disciples that he's going to the Father. And it's good news for them.

Now surely they thought, and we know they thought, by their response, Wait, you're not leaving. What are you talking about? Certainly can't be good news. But Jesus says, it's better that I go because the Spirit will come.

The Spirit will be in you until I return. And in these verses, Jesus tells them why it's better. Why it's better that we have the Spirit with us and not Jesus with us at present in physical form.

And so before we proceed to 1 Corinthians 12 to 14, I want us to camp out on these verses. In a word, do not be afraid. The Spirit comes so that Christ will be with you wherever you go.

[6:16] Do not be afraid. The Spirit comes so that Christ will be with you wherever you go. We're going to break this out. Three points. The first is the Spirit mediates the presence of Christ. The Spirit mediates the presence of Christ.

As we just said, these verses are marking, or this Last Supper is marking a dramatic transition in the history of God's dealings with His people. Jesus is leaving His people to go to the Father, and the Spirit is coming to be with His people.

Threading through these verses are a reference to the Helper, which we've come to understand as the Holy Spirit. If you look down there in John 14, 16, I will ask the Father, He'll give you another Helper.

Now, this word's hard to translate. It occurs a couple times here, once in 1 John 2, 2. Only those places, you know. It's sometimes translated as a counselor. Your Bible might include that, but it's not meant to be understood as a camp counselor, or a marriage counselor who speaks in hushed tones, or something like that, that wouldn't get the fullness of the Spirit here.

Or sometimes they interpret it as a comforter. But you shouldn't think of the Lord as a quilt or a blanket. Not the Holy Spirit in that way, or a hand-patter in the hospital room, or even a helper.

[7:27] I think it has categories of inferiority that we read into it. Or an advocate is another word that's used to translate this word. But the word is not as important, so the word and how it's translated is not as important as seeing that the Holy Spirit comes to continue Jesus' work of strengthening and helping.

Jesus says, and you see that down there, He will give you another Helper. What does that mean? Some say it means another of the same kind. The idea is another Helper.

What the reference is, there is a Helper here, and it is the Lord Jesus Christ. The Spirit is going to come and be a lot like Jesus Christ.

A second Helper who will be like the first. Jesus says, this next Helper, you see that, even the Spirit of Truth. So that's giving us His name, even the Spirit of Truth.

The Spirit will have the same. He'll be a Helper. He'll be the same ministry as Jesus. Jesus is the way, the truth, and the life. So to the Spirit is the Spirit of Truth pointing to and bearing witness to the truth.

[8:44] But there's an important difference here at the end of verse 17. If you look, you know Him, for He dwells with you and will be in you. Now, it's crucial to understand what is going on in that verse.

Now, everyone knows what folks mean when they say, I hate goodbyes. After all, boys to men said, it's so hard to say goodbye yesterday and all those things.

Loved ones, friends, and good times. And Jesus has just told His disciples goodbye. And so we've got to keep that in view. Can you imagine?

That's got to be the worst goodbye of all time. And so what He's saying, the dramatic transition is not that He's leaving. The dramatic transition is that the Spirit that was with them in Him will be with them by being in them.

So the dramatic transition is this reality that the Spirit that was with Jesus every moment of His life will be in Him. And if you remember, the life of the Son of God began with an explosion of the Spirit.

[9:48] Open up the Gospel of Luke and you'll see it all over the place. The Spirit caused Mary to conceive. The Spirit caused John to jump with joy in Elizabeth's womb, his first cousin.

The Spirit led Simeon to the temple to see the baby Jesus. The Spirit descended on Jesus in the form of a dove at His baptism. The Spirit led Him into temptation, sustained Him through temptation. The Spirit worked in Him through signs and wonders as we know, and also through Acts 10. The Spirit empowered Him to offer up His life as a sacrifice. Jesus was not alone on the cross.

Jesus was empowered by the Spirit to offer Himself. And the Spirit raised Him from the dead. And what Jesus is saying here is that that Spirit will be in you.

The Spirit that raised Jesus from the dead also dwells within you, Romans 8 tells us. But there's more. The main work of the Spirit will not merely be like a companion.

[10:57] Again, the main work of the Spirit will be to mediate Christ to you, to bring Christ to you. Some of the most moving verses, if you keep your eyes down at John 14, the Lord continues, I will not leave you as orphans.

Now, you can imagine, what are you talking about? You just said you're going to leave. What are you, you know, speaking out of both sides of your mouth. I will come to you. Look at verse 20.

In that day, you will know that I am in the Father, and you in me, and I in you. What? Verse 21. He who loves me will be loved by my Father, and I will love him and manifest myself to him.

Verse 23. If anyone loves me, keep my word, and my Father will love him, and we will come to him and make our home with him. Now, what is going on here?

If you remember, Jesus just said, I'm going to go to the Father. My Father has a big house with many, many rooms. We can play football or whatever it is. We're going to go up. I'm going to go up to the Father. I'm going to prepare a place for you.

[12:04] But what he says here is the Spirit is going to come to you and make a place for the Father and Son within you. So much of the New Testament comes together in these verses.

Just what Jesus says in John 15. I am the vine, you are the branches. Whoever abides in me and I in him, he it is that bears much fruit. What does it mean to abide in you and I in you and you in me? What is he talking about? He's talking about what the Spirit is doing. Galatians 2:20. I've been crucified with Christ, therefore I no longer live. But Jesus Christ now lives in me. Colossians 1 says, God chose to make known the glory of this mystery, which is Christ in you, the hope of glory. So he's telling us something radical. And on the one hand, yes, our Christian hope is that Christ is seated at the right hand of God. But our Christian hope doesn't stop there. Christ is dwelling with us by the power of the Holy Spirit.

And how does it come to pass? I think there's no text more beautiful. I think in this respect, in Ephesians 3, it must be a text, I pray, almost every day. He says, and we have for you.

[13:13] For this reason, I bow my knees before the Father, from whom every family in heaven and on earth is named. That according to the riches of his glory, he may grant you to be strengthened with power through his Spirit and your inner being.

So that Christ may dwell within you. Christ may dwell in your heart through faith.

What's the point? The great glory of the Spirit's work in the new covenant is not signs and wonders, tongues and prophecy or power encounter. The great glory of the Spirit's work in the new covenant is that he brings Christ to live within us.

To work within us. To be with us. J.I. Packer helpfully says, what is the essence, heart and core of the Spirit's work today? What is the central focal element of his many-sided ministry?

The Spirit makes known the personal presence in and with the Christian and the church of the risen and reigning Savior, the Jesus of history, who is the Christ of faith.

[14:18] The distinctive, constant, basic ministry of the Holy Spirit under the new covenant is to mediate Christ to believers. So what's his central ministry?

If we could put it this way, the central ministry of the Holy Spirit is that of a homemaker. Sin's a homewrecker. Spirit's a homemaker.

He comes to make a home within us of the Father and the Spirit. Maybe that's why the Spirit is often overlooked. In our home, my wife, Kim, and many moms in this room work tirelessly to set the table with food day in, day out.

We should be grateful. I should be more grateful that food appears on my table every night. But it's so easy to forget. Why? Because the food isn't the point. The meal is.

Right? If you're anything like me, you're so burdened. You're running all over life, it seems like, all over the county throughout the day. And yet, when you gather back around that table, everything comes alive.

[15:25] You know, you're hearing what's going on. You're sharing joys and sorrows, aches and burdens. The point of the meal is not the food. The point is fellowship. Well, here's what's going on.

If you have a relationship with Jesus Christ, it is because the Holy Spirit set the table. He brought about an encounter. With the living God, the Jesus Christ.

Remember, we blessed to a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ. Well, that resurrected Savior, you encounter Him. Have you found freedom and forgiveness?

Have you found courage in His promises? Have you felt your heart burn at the preaching of the Word or been overcome at singing amazing grace? Have you sensed the Lord holding you through the pain and adversity?

Well, then you have the Holy Spirit to thank. You have Christ to thank. I would argue the most spiritual thing you can do is cry out for the Spirit to build Christ in you.

[16:33] Just like Colossians 2 so that we'd be rooted and grounded in Him and walk in Him. What in the world? That's the way the New Testament talks again and again. Oh, Lord.

I must pray this verse. John 15. This verse. Ephesians 3. Every day. Lord, come. I want to think what you think. I want to love what you love. I want to hate what you hate.

I want to ache over what you ache over. I want to speak like you speak. I mean, how often? Words just shoot out of my mouth. I don't want those words, Lord. Help me. May Christ make me more like you.

He's not. The Spirit's not a slot machine. You know, you stick in a quarter, you get an experience.

That's not what He's trying to do. He's trying to make you more like Christ.

And these verses help center us more accurately with Scripture. So the Spirit mediates Christ. The Spirit testifies to the truth of Christ. Testifies to the truth of Christ.

[17:43] It mediates the presence of Christ. The Spirit testifies to the truth of Christ. And in fact, I didn't know we were singing that song before the message. But there's tons of this theology in that song. You just take it and apply it.

But He gets to the testifying, the witness of the truth. If you look down there, verse 17, He calls Him the Spirit of truth. But hop down to verse 25.

These things I have spoken to you while I was still with you. But the Helper, that's our word again, the Holy Spirit, appositionally telling us who the Helper is, 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. The Helper, the Holy Spirit, the Spirit of truth.

Why is He called the Spirit of truth? Because He's pointing to the truth again and again. He's witnessing to the truth. So He's saying to these disciples, the Spirit will help you remember everything I said. The Spirit will testify and bear witness.

[18:43] You know, in our culture, when we have a big trial, we have a prosecution and a defense. And both are trying to make their case, right? You're trying to discern the truth.

You've got a jury. If it's a criminal trial, you've got a jury that helps determine the truth. And then, you know, it's in the hands of the juror. Well, in this culture, that's not the way it was done.

It wasn't done with like a team of lawyers. It was done by a judge who would summon witnesses and ask questions. Say, you know, were you there that night? You know, did you see somebody with a candlestick in the ballroom?

Or something like that. You know, you're asking these types of questions. What He's saying is the Spirit is going to witness about Christ. The witness that will be called by the Lord to help you know, so to speak, and understand the truth will be the Holy Spirit.

And this is what we must see is that Jesus had one constant companion throughout His life. Not His mother. Not His father. Jesus had 12 disciples who He talked to in a different way than everybody else.

[19:48] He had three that He brought into the inner circle. Peter, James, and John. But none was His constant companion. His constant companion was the Holy Spirit. That might be the...

Well, that's second to the first point. The most important thing to know about the Spirit in the New Testament. The Spirit was there when He was born, right? The Spirit was there when He was baptized. When He was tempted from all eternity, the Spirit dwelt with the Father and the Son.

And so, Basil of Cesaria, in his book on the Holy Spirit, he says, All the activity of Christ unfolded in the presence of the Spirit. So, who is with Christ throughout His life when He tucked away and no one was with Him?

Well, the Holy Spirit was. And so, the Holy Spirit knows Him inside and out. You know, we think we know a person. Well, the Holy Spirit is God. Shares the same essence of God. Divine nature. So, He knows Jesus inside and out. And so, after Jesus is exalted, the Spirit will come to bear witness, to tell you everything about Him. So, the Spirit is a homemaker. He's also a teacher. [20:49] He's coming to teach all that the Spirit comes to teach and testify to believers. What happened in two ways. Well, not all, but primarily inspiration and illumination.

That's what Jesus is referencing this night. You know, Jesus is saying the Spirit will come and bring all these things into remembrance to you. He'll inspire you to bring all these things into remembrance so that you can lay down infallible eyewitness testimony about Jesus Christ. He's saying the Gospels are the result of what Jesus promised this night. They were carried along by the Holy Spirit. What would we do without the Gospels?

But the Spirit did not just inspire the Apostles to write down what Jesus said. The Spirit inspired the Apostles to write down more than He said. Some people say Jesus would have been shocked by the rest of the New Testament being written.

Why not just keep the red words, the words He spoke? That's not true, I would argue. Look down in verse, chapter 16. Or actually, you know, it's back in 14, sorry.

[22:00] But He says there... You know what?

I wrote the wrong reference in my text. Look at Acts 16, verse 12, or in my notes. He says, I still have many... Look down there. I still have many things to say to you.

So He's aware that they can't bear them all on this night. I have many things to say. When the Spirit comes, verse 13, He will guide you into all truth, for He will not speak of His own authority.

Whatever He hears, He speaks. And He will declare to you the things that are to come. So we have the Gospels, but we also have Romans, Ephesians, 1 Corinthians, Hebrews, James, 1 Peter.

So the Spirit inspires the Word of God. You know, all Scripture, 2 Timothy 3, 16, is breathed out by God, meaning inspired by God.

[23:00] So the Spirit comes to inspire. The Spirit comes to illuminate. The Spirit illuminates the Word. The Spirit opens our eyes to see and our minds to understand. Biblically, we have a blinding disease.

We have a sin nature that causes us not to be able to understand the Word of God. We also have a blinding enemy. That's why Jesus said in John 14, which we read a few moments ago, and you saw it, the world does not know about this truth that you are proclaiming.

What does He mean? That the world cannot receive even though it has eyes. It cannot hear even though it has ears. It needs the Spirit to do His work. And so what, if you put these things together, what the New Testament teaches is that the Scriptures plainly evidence the truth.

The Spirit inspires the Scriptures to plainly evidence the truth. They are the Word of God. And yet the Spirit does a second work of illuminating the truth to us.

I love the way 2 Corinthians 3 and 4 says it. It talks about how when they would read the, we would read the Bible, there would be a veil over our eyes to see the Bible.

[24:10] And yet in the New Covenant, the veil is open. But it's not merely that we can read. He says, the Spirit, the same Lord who spoke light into darkness, has put the light of the glory of God into our hearts so that we can see Christ illuminating the Word to us.

The idea is the Spirit and the Word, the Word and the Spirit work together. They're the two hands of God, as one has said. The Spirit is like a set of glasses to cause us to see and to understand the truth.

I'll never forget getting my first pair of glasses, I think in 11th grade. My last name has always began with A, which meant I sat in the front of almost every class because they're organized alphabetically, which meant I didn't notice that my eyes were so bad until I was reading a lot more and they kept going down.

They're just continuing to go downhill, you know? Lose the near and the far. I mean, you just don't see anything anymore. But I remember sitting with one of my friends after I got in a new pair of glasses and we're like sitting in this picnic table, hanging out and talking.

I was like, oh my goodness, look at that bird. What kind of beautiful bird is that? And he goes, that's a robin, you idiot.

[25:36] You know, like the most common, you know, ubiquitous bird. That's a robin, you idiot. And yet, that's the way life felt. Suddenly with glasses, I could see everything was vivid.

Everything was there, you know? Everything was full of color and the same thing the Spirit does. If you felt God speaking in His Word, if you felt your heart cling to a promise, felt your life reshaped by a passage of Scripture, it's because of the Spirit of God.

I don't know how many times I'd heard the Scriptures read and then suddenly, shafts of light. I'm addicted to it. Not that I want more. But all of it's kind of driving home this point, you know, with the Word and the Spirit being together. It's driving home this point that the Spirit has a ministry and its ministry is to glorify Christ.

In the same way that the Son had a ministry to glorify the Father. Remember, He says, John 17, I glorified you. The Spirit has a ministry to glorify the Father and the Son, to glorify the Son.

[26:57] Look in verse 16, 14. He says, He will glorify me, for He will take what is mine and declare it to you. So as a teacher, the Spirit has one message, so to speak, is to glorify Jesus Christ, to point people to Jesus Christ.

You could say the Spirit has a floodlight ministry. Jeff Packer said that when the floodlights are done well, you don't see them, right? You don't see a floodlight. Why? Because you just see what is flooded by light.

And so the Spirit has a floodlight ministry. The Spirit never says, look at me, look at me, look at the gifts I give. That's a misunderstanding of the Spirit. Some churches might teach that, but that's not what, that doesn't resonate with the New Testament.

The Spirit is not shining a light on Himself. The Spirit's shining a floodlight on Jesus Christ. Every time we read the Bible, meditate on the Bible, sing the Bible, hear the Bible, preach, seek the Lord in the Bible, it's as if the Spirit is standing behind us, shining the floodlight on Jesus Christ.

That's what the Spirit wants you to see, wants me to see. And we'd be blown away by what God is doing. The Spirit's doing His work right. He'll help you see the Bible's not actually about you.

[28:18] You know, sometimes I first became a believer, thinking, or the way I read the Bible before becoming a believer, I thought it's mainly about me. You know, flip it over, I need a promise, you know, I need this or that, you know, like I need something for today. And sometimes you've got to be really careful doing that because you might get a promise that you don't want, actually, or a confrontation with the Lord that you don't want.

And then suddenly, after becoming a Christian, the Holy Spirit beginning to work, I began to just see all of it's about Jesus Christ. Just all over the place. Everything's pointing at Him.

You know, the burning bush and the rams and the cloud and the fire. All these things are pointing to Jesus Christ. All of it has one message. And so, it's all about the message of God, what God's done through Christ.

And the Spirit as a ministry, that's what the Spirit resonates with. Not power encountering, but with being blown away, being floored by the gospel. So, we need that work.

Thirdly, the Spirit advances the mission of Christ. The Spirit mediates the presence of Christ, brings Christ to us, testifies to the truth of Christ.

[29:30] It's like the witness. It's saying, Christ is unsaleable. His character is unsaleable. His truth is unsaleable. Advances the mission of Christ.

It's so important to not lose the context. So, this is the last night, you know. It's so hard to say goodbye.

Disciples know. they, they, yeah, I don't know what they know, what they think is going to happen in their mission, but they do know they're on the mission. Because Jesus called them and said, follow me. And the third thing they learn about the Spirit, the Spirit's going to continue to advance the mission through them.

He says, verse 16, chapter 16, verse 7, I mean, this is almost incredulous to read. Nevertheless, I tell you the truth, it is to your advantage that I go away.

I mean, I'm like, 64 reasons that is not true, Jesus. If I do not go away, the helper will not come. That's not like Jesus' hands are tied or something like that.

[30:42] What it's saying is the plan that God has had before the foundation of the world has an order. I'm going to go to the Father.

I'm going to send the Spirit to be with you. If I go, I'll send it to you. And when He comes, He'll convict the world of sin and righteousness and judgment.

He said, the Spirit will be in you, mediating the presence of Christ. He said, the Spirit will be like a Spirit of truth, testifying, witnessing to the truth of Christ.

Now He says, the Spirit will go with you to advance the mission of Christ, convict the world about Christ. He's saying the Spirit is a homemaker, it's also a teacher, He's also an evangelist. He is our great evangelist. I mean, what does it mean that the Spirit will convict the world? Well, you remember, Jesus was a fork in the road His whole life He was a fork in the road. Follow me, I'll make you a fisherman.

[31:53] A lion in the sand, He was in the world and the world was made through Him but the world did not know Him. The world rejected Him, His peace, His joy, His love. But He called some out of the world, He chose them, led them to conviction of sin and into the grace of God.

And He's saying, the Spirit's going to continue to do that work. That which I've done in the proclaiming of the gospel, the Spirit will do, He'll seek those. I think this text, its main reference is to Acts 2.

He says, when He comes, He will convict the world of sin and righteousness and judgment. What happens when the Spirit comes? Do you remember that? These disciples, I mean, Holy Saturday was a sad day.

They thought Jesus' mission had failed. He rose again from the dead. He spent some time with Him and then He said, the Spirit's going to come in power and you will be my witnesses. And so He saw Peter who denied the Lord three times before the rooster crowed.

He stands up and proclaims. Why? Because the Spirit fell upon Him but the Spirit did not just fall upon Him. What happened when He proclaimed?

[32:58] What happened when the Spirit fell? What happened when Peter proclaimed that Jesus, Jesus of Nazareth, the man you killed, God has made both Lord and Christ?

What happened at the conclusion of His message? They were cut to the heart. Literally, sawn in two. The wonder of the day of Pentecost is not the tongues of fire, whatever's going on there. The great wonder is that hell-bent sinners were cut to the heart. It's amazing. It's unreal. He's saying, they saw it live in color. The Spirit saved more people on that day, likely, than the whole ministry of Jesus Christ in those three years.

Why? Because it's better. It's amazing. The Spirit will do the convicting work. If we don't have the Spirit, we might start preaching CBT or psychotherapy or stoicism or something like that.

Just throw out the Bible. Why? Because nothing will come to fruit. But if we have the Spirit of God, then put me before any man. Because the Spirit of God can turn on the lights.

[34:13] He'll convict the world of sin. You know, God so loved the world, not because it's so big or so beautiful, but because it's so bad. So broken. You know, this past week, we've noticed a lot of division in our culture.

Just kind of next week, next week. But the Lindsay Clancy thing is verdict, mistrial. It's revealed so much division. But there's one thing our culture is very united in. Rebellion against God.

It's united in rebellion against God. Nothing changes. No amount of therapy, psychotherapy, CBT changes without the gospel, without the Holy Spirit convicting of sin, convicting of righteousness.

The Spirit convicts the emptiness of dead religion. That's why I think Peter said, this Jesus you crucified, God raised. I mean, that was the message of the gospel in the book of Acts, really.

And he's saying, yeah, all your religion, you've got to remember, Jesus was not killed by the bad guys. He was killed by the very best of guys. And so, what does the Holy Spirit do? He convicts the world of the deadness of their religion, of the deadness of their righteousness.

[35:22] You can work to the bone, but you cannot be right with God on the basis of your works. And so, he convicts the world of judgment, all their wrong conclusions, wrong assessment about Jesus. The idea is the Holy Spirit is a witness, but he's also like a prosecuting attorney making his case, driving home his case.

He doesn't do it, though, merely by physical evidence. He does it by driving it into our hearts. And so, Jesus says, it's better that I go away so that the Spirit would convict the world of sin and righteousness and judgment so that he would bring about true salvation.

It's so vital, you know, to ask ourselves. 2 Corinthians says, make your calling and election sure. In the South, we all love Jesus.

And yet, has he done this convicting work? One guy says, the only people who have a right to say anything about Christianity are those who have felt its force.

has he caused you to be born again? Like, if Jesus is just like a part of the package of making your life stable, you know, started eating better, working out three times a week, you know, stopped

dating around, found a girl.

[36 : 57] If Jesus is just kind of a part of the package, then I don't think that this work has been done. Because Jesus, when he comes in, he turns everything upside down. If he has it, I want to appeal to you to come to Jesus Christ.

Today's the day of salvation. Why? Because when the gospel is preached, the Holy Spirit empowers the response to trust in Christ, to be fused to him, to be united to him, all his saving benefits are yours in him.

And so, we remember the power of the Spirit, you know, as we kind of continue through this series, we want to continue to remember the great work of the Spirit on our lives. It's so easy, at times, for me to remember the work of God in my life, and at times, it's not.

I was reading about an old philosopher and mathematician, Blaise Pascal. He had an odd habit. For years, every time he changed his sports coat, that was back when men wore sports coats, not just Buddy, and Scott, he had an odd habit.

He would unsew a piece of paper from inside his sport coat. He would sew it into the next sport coat, something he always wanted near his heart. What was it?

[38 : 18] I don't know that anybody was asking when he was alive, what was it? It was private, right? Pascal was best known for a scientist, mathematician, and philosopher, so perhaps there was a formula in there, kind of like the rib recipe, you know, a wing recipe, Colonel Sanders recipe.

The answer, though, wasn't discovered until his death. A servant found Pascal's personal account of his conversion, conversion. And I want you to see this.

He says, the year of grace, not the year of our Lord. 1654, Monday, 23rd, November. From about half past 10 at night until about half past midnight, fire.

God of Abraham, God of Isaac, God of Jacob, not of the philosophers, or of the learned. Certitude, what is that? Certainty, certitude, feeling, joy, peace, God of Jesus Christ, my God and your God, forgetfulness of the world and everything except God.

He's only found by the ways taught in the gospel. Joy, joy, tears of joy, Jesus Christ, Jesus Christ, I left him, I fled him, renounced, crucified, let me never be separated from him.

[39 : 45] I love it. You know, it's written like a prayer. Because what's happening, like when the Lord comes upon you, filled with bullet points of perfectly crafted phrases, it's trying to capture this encounter, this suddenly, everything's changed.

I think it's the culmination of all we've been talking about, all of this was happening to Pascal. In that moment, he's realizing Jesus is the homemaker. He's come and made a home for him, within him, for the Father and the Son.

He's a teacher. He's sworn to anything. He's an evangelist, proclaiming the truth and convicting him of his sin that he would turn and trust in the Lord.

And so, the greatest way to honor the Spirit is to be like Pascal, I think, to treasure Jesus Christ, to remember the dramatic work.

I think so often we get into things of the Spirit, we begin to think everything else is dramatic. The real dramatic work, the most dramatic work, is dead sinners being suddenly made alive and being united in Jesus Christ.

[40 : 57] And the fact that this Savior is doing this everywhere. That's the other reason it's better. Because Jesus Christ was limited to space and time.

He was a man, perfect, I mean, he's God man, fully man, fully God. Yet the Holy Spirit comes to do that work everywhere the gospel goes.

Do not be afraid. The Spirit comes so that Christ will be with you wherever you go. that we might supplement our understanding of our Christian life. That our comfort is not merely in this generic I will be with you.

Our comfort is in this truth that God has drawn near to us by the Spirit. We can trace things out like Pascal.

We can point back to times. We can be aware that he's sustaining us and keeping us. Let us pray. Father in heaven, we thank you for these few minutes.

[42 : 04] Thank you for the opportunity. We praise you, God the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit. We pray that you would come. Lord, I pray, Holy Spirit, that you would come and cause Christ to be magnified in our hearts and in our lives.

