

**The Holy Spirit:
Source of Spiritual Growth
John 14:15-26; 15:26-27; 16:5-15
Sermon Outline**

Introduction: The disciples in John 14-16 were depressed because Jesus was leaving them. But Jesus said it was better for them, because he could then send them the Holy Spirit.

I) How the Holy Spirit made things better for the disciples

- He would never leave
- He would internalize things
- He would defend the work and Person of Jesus
- He would fully explain Jesus

II) What the Spirit's work means for us

A) We have rich insight into Jesus (the NT)

B) We have God himself in us

C) We have shepherds and teachers down the ages.

Questions for Reflection this Week

- 1) Respond to the following statement: "If I had lived when Jesus was tangibly present, it would be a lot easier to be a Christian."
- 2) In John 16.7 Jesus says that it is better for his disciples that he leave them. Why could not Jesus send the Holy Spirit before he left? List all the reasons that Jesus gives in John 14-16 for why the Holy Spirit made things better for the disciples.
- 3) Try to imagine the state of the church in the 21st century if Jesus had not kept his promise to his disciples to lead them into all the truth through the Spirit.
- 4) Reflect on the following statement: "When we say in the Nicene Creed that we believe in an "apostolic church", we mean in part that we base our understanding and our life upon the tradition that the apostles have given us in what came to be known as the New Testament. The New Testament is the Old Testament interpreted in the light of the life, death, resurrection, and promised return of Jesus Christ."
- 5) In his book *Bad Religion* Ross Douthat says that America is a 'nation of heretics'—deeply religious, perhaps, but adrift from orthodoxy. We may be in love with celebrity preachers and spirituality in general but we are clueless about what the Bible actually teaches. Do you agree? Is this more or less true of you? How well do you know the Bible?
- 6) According to Jesus in John 14-16, the Holy Spirit both teaches us the truth about Jesus (John 16:12-14) and brings Jesus and the Father to us experientially (14:23). How are these two things different from each other? How are they connected? Which has more appeal to you? Which is more true to your experience?
- 7) According to the NT, the Holy Spirit (a) brings us the truth about Christ and the Father, (b) makes God himself real in our experience, and (c) sends us pastors, teachers, and evangelists in every new generation to keep the truth alive and fresh. Spend some time thanking the Lord for the gift of the Spirit.