

May 15, 2005  
Pentecost

*"We Still Have the Holy Spirit"*

## **JOHN 16:5-11**

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**N**ow I am going to him who sent me, yet none of you asks me, 'Where are you going?' <sup>6</sup> Because I have said these things, you are filled with grief. <sup>7</sup> But I tell you the truth: It is for your good that I am going away. Unless I go away, the Counselor will not come to you; but if I go, I will send him to you. <sup>8</sup> When he comes, he will convict the world of guilt {<sup>8</sup> Or will expose the guilt of the world} in regard to sin and righteousness and judgment: <sup>9</sup> in regard to sin, because men do not believe in me; <sup>10</sup> in regard to righteousness, because I am going to the Father, where you can see me no longer; <sup>11</sup> and in regard to judgment, because the prince of this world now stands condemned.

"I will return!" Those were the words spoken to the Philippine people by a retreating General Douglas MacArthur during WW2. MacArthur kept his promise. He did return. He drove the Japanese from the island and rescued the people. "I will come back and take you to be with me." These were the words our Lord Jesus spoke to his disciples and to us the night before he died. Jesus will keep his promise. He will return to take us to be with him. That is the hope that we carry with us and it changes every day of our lives. Do we have to wait alone as Jesus seems to delay his return? No. He promised to send the Holy Spirit, the comforter, who will be with us and bless us every day of our lives here on earth.

Where is the Holy Spirit? Reminds me of a thirteen-year old girl was baby-sitting the neighbor boy across the street, about four years old. She tucked him in bed and said, "Do you want to pray?" He said, "What is that?" When she tried to tell him that God is everywhere, even in the room with them, he laughed and said, "Where is he? I cannot see him. Is he in my closet? Is he under my bed?"

Where is the Holy Spirit? We don't see him descending on us in the form of dove or lighting on our heads with tongues of fire. We do not hear the sound of the mighty rushing wind and we do not have people standing up and speaking in languages they never spoke before. That does not mean the Holy Spirit is not with us this today, and tomorrow and everyday. This morning we want to listen to Jesus' words and hear him promise Christians of every age that, **"We Still Have the Holy Spirit."**

### **1) He is still here to comfort us**

How do you know that you have the Holy Spirit right here with you now to comfort you? Listen again to what Jesus said, "Now am going to him who sent me, yet none of you asks me, 'Where are you going?' Because I have said these things, you are filled with grief." Look at the faces of the disciples as Jesus is telling them how he will be leaving them soon. Just look at them. Sadness, sorrow, pain. The other day there was picture of a fourteen year old boy standing over his daddy who had been hit by a bomb in Iraq. There was sadness in that boys eyes that told the grief he was going through. You could have seen a similar sadness in the disciples.

Have you ever seen Christians with sad looks in their faces and in their eyes? Sure you have. Maybe this sadness is there because someone they loved has died, or they are fighting some illness. Have you seen people with fear in their eyes, and maybe even a little anger? Sure you have. When someone you love leaves you, it is never easy to endure the pain. Imagine living three years with Jesus, having his friendship, his love, his warmth, his presence, his loyalty and faithfulness. You can begin to understand why they were sad when he talked about leaving them.

Have you ever been homesick? I am not talking about the first time away from home when you went to camp, or when you went to boot camp or even off to war, or away from home that first year in college. I am talking about the homesickness you feel right now deep in the pit of your stomach, the aching and yearning that Paul felt when he said, "I long to be absent from this body and present with the Lord." To homesick Christians who miss being with Jesus face to face, he promise his Holy Spirit.

Listen to the promise again. "But I tell you the truth; it is for your good that I am going away. Unless I go away, the Counselor (Comforter) will not come to you; but if I go I will send him to you." Jesus calls the Holy Spirit our counselor or comforter, someone who comes to you and stays with you and reminds you of all the blessings you have in Christ, especially in your low moments. Remember when you were off to camp. You were homesick, but then you met a friend that stayed by your side. Remember when you were off to war, and your buddies, your band of brothers, were there to help you through each day. Remember when you lost someone you loved, and a card came in the mail that had just the right words of comfort for you, or someone called who spoke just the right words for you. No friend in need can even begin to compare to how the Holy Spirit helps you.

Jesus talked more about the Holy Spirit that night before he died. He also said in John 14:26, "But the Counselor, the Holy Spirit whom the Father will send in my name, will teach you all things and will remind you of everything I have said to you." The Holy Spirit leads us into the truths of God's Word and makes the blessings that we have in Jesus real to us. Then the Holy Spirit keeps reminding us of these blessings daily, even hour by hour.

In John 15:26 Jesus said this about the Holy Spirit. "When the Counselor comes, whom I will send to you from the Father, the Spirit of truth who goes out from the Father, will testify to me." If you could add up how many times the Holy Spirit came into your life this past week, and pointed your eyes up to Jesus, you would truly be astounded and amazed.

Romans 8:16 says this about the testimony of the Holy Spirit that happens in your life. "The Spirit himself testifies with our spirit that we are God's children." Everything inside of me testifies that I don't deserve to be a child of God, and that he should not love because of the evil that I have allowed to enter into me life. In Isaiah the Lord says, "But your iniquities have separated you from your God; your sins have hidden his face from you." It is the Holy Spirit who helps you see every day how your iniquities have been removed in Jesus and the gap has been bridged through Jesus. Instead of being an outcast you are now a dear child. 1 John 3 says, "Behold what manner of love the Father has bestowed on us that we should be the children of God." We take pictures of close moments with our family. Think ahead to your future here on this earth. Jesus has not left you alone. He has given you the Holy Spirit and those great picture worthy moments of realizing who you are in Jesus are waiting for you in the future.

## **2) He is still here to correct us**

The Holy Spirit who comforts us also corrects people and straightens out their thinking. Jesus said, "When he comes he will convict the world of guilt in regard to sin." It is not hard to convince people there is a lot of sin in the world. Listen to the news as you drive. Read the paper. Watch the television. There are days when we get a sick feeling in our stomachs because of all the evil in the world. It is easy to see evil in others, but it is much harder to see it in me. That is where we need the Holy Spirit to convict the world of guilt in regard to sin. The Apostle Paul confessed in Romans 7, "For I did not know what it was to covet if the law had not said, 'Do not covet.'" Then he goes on to say, "Once the commandment came, sin sprang to life in me, and I died." We are born into this world making excuses for ourselves, justifying ourselves and minimizing the weakness and faults we have. Then the Holy Spirit goes to work in our hearts and sets the record straight. He shows us how we have fallen short of God's glory.

A television pastor from Southern California once wrote a book with the title, "Self Esteem The New Reformation." He advocated not talking to people about sin so they would not get a low opinion of themselves. He said that you need to constantly remind people of what they could be and help them realize their potential and dream their possibilities. In the book he tells the story of a boy in Norway who found an egg in the woods. He took it home and placed it in a nest of eggs that was being hatched by a goose. The egg actually hatched and out came a strange creature with down that looked more like brown fur and sharp claw like feet instead of webbed feet, and a hooked beak instead of flat. The ugly creature could not swim and like to eat meat instead of grass. One day an eagle flew over the farm, and the ugly creature felt a stirring inside. It began to flex its wings, began to run, and fly, upward, upward into the thermals. The ugly bird finally discovered who it was, not a goose but a mighty eagle. The pastor then made the point that you just need to help people see who they are, and not talk to them about their problem of sin or it will destroy their self esteem.

The Holy Spirit does not do that for us. The Holy Spirit convinces of our guilt and shame, and shows us how ugly we are by ourselves in the sight of God. The same Holy Spirit also shows us Jesus as the one who took the burden of our sin, removed it and made us clean before our God.

Jesus also said the Holy Spirit will convict the world of righteousness. He said, "In regard to righteousness, because I am going to the Father where you can see me no more." When Jesus lived on this earth he provided all of humanity with an example of what a righteous person is like. Have you ever been with someone who was so nice that it actually made you aware of your shortcomings and faults? Imagine being around Jesus. His very presence on this earth showed people that God's ways are so much higher than our ways. Jesus established that the bar for eternal life is perfection.

What if there was one person in history who was perfect, and what if that one person could take his perfect righteous life and give it to you as free gift. That is what Jesus did for us. Last week several people bet on a horse in the Kentucky Derby. The winning ticket was over \$800, 000. Some would say, "Wasn't that person lucky? What is money worth compared to having Jesus blood to cleanse us, and his righteousness to cover us? The Holy Spirit tells us what is more important?

It is the Holy Spirit who also convinces us about judgment. "He will convict the world in regard to judgment." Then Jesus adds, "In regard to judgment because the prince of this world now stands condemned." The Holy Spirit is so powerful in your life and mine that he convinces us of the truth that this world will someday be destroyed and we must all stand before God in the final judgment to give an account of how we have lived. Satan loves to accuse us before God's throne day and night. Jesus said the Holy Spirit will come to us and convince us that the prince of this world now stands condemned. The Revelation says, "They overcome him by the blood of the Lamb and the word of the testimony." You can tell Satan to take a hike, and take a long walk off a short pier, jump in a lake, and even go to hell where he belongs. You can tell him how you have the Holy Spirit and the Holy Spirit has convinced you that that the blood of Jesus Christ your Savior, God's Son cleanses you from all sin. "Shine in our hearts O most Holy Light, that we Jesus Christ may know aright." Amen.