The Holy Spirit’s Help

July 13, 2025; John 16:5-15; Communion Service

*Say it in a Sentence: The gift of the Spirit brings about His necessary work of convicting (sin/righteousness/judgment), guiding in truth, and disclosing spiritual matters to Christ’s followers*

I hope our series in John 13-17 has encouraged you. We have tried to enter the room, sit at Jesus’ feet, learn the truth, and then apply them to our lives. We entitled our series **Untroubled: Relying on the Comfort of Christ** because this passage has “trouble” as a backdrop.

* Jesus is troubled in his inner man knowing the suffering coming within hours.
* The disciples are troubled because their leader is leaving and they are unsure what that means for their future.
* We can also be troubled by the weights we experience.

Trouble is not the sum total of this story. In fact, it is not even the dominant focus. Jesus will courageously pursue the guilty verdict and the cross. The disciples will have a few bad days but will soon light the world on fire for Jesus. We wanted to communicate that you and I do not need to be stuck in trouble.

* There is a different possibility.
  + We can live with peaceful hearts because Jesus gives us his peace.
  + We can serve amid challenge because Jesus washed the feet of his disciples pointing to his ultimate cleansing.
  + We can produce spiritual fruit because we abide in Jesus and he will bring it about.
  + We can confidently face opposition knowing our savior did.
  + We can confidently live faithfully because the Spirit works in our lives.

When we rely on the various comforts of Christ in this passage, our hearts are like this picture … peaceful, restful, and ready for what the Lord has for us.

Please turn with me in your Bible to John 16.

In comparison with other kinds of churches, we tend to say little about the Holy Spirit.

* We avoid the sensationalism that sometimes captures people’s imagination. But that does not mean we believe the Spirit is unimportant.

We believe in the Trinity that is God is one being in three co-equal, co-eternal persons. Those persons are the Father, Son, and the Holy Spirit.

* In John 13-17 we have one of the most extended discussions of the Holy Spirit and the vital role he played in the disciples’ lives and by extension our own.

May the Lord help us to avoid assigning the Spirit of God tasks or events that he does not do, but may the Lord also help us avoid minimizing the work the Spirit does. – Pray for that –

Please follow along as I read John 16:5-15. This is the Word of the Lord. [Read the passage] The title of the message this morning is **The Holy Spirit’s Help**. What should we do about the Spirit’s help?

**I. Rejoice in the Gift of the Spirit**

It is easy to become ungrateful or uninterested in God’s provisions. Married couples struggle because somewhere along the line they changed their view from “God gave me a wonderful gift in my spouse to enjoy life and grow to be more like Jesus” to “God gave me this wretched soul to torment my very existence.”

* Children struggle with their parents because rather then seeing them as a gift, they are people in their way to getting whatever they want.
* It is so easy to stop caring about God’s precious gifts.

The Spirit is another possibility. We take the Spirit and his work for granted. We no longer care about the gracious provision and opt instead to focus on other sources.

**A. He comes amidst sorrow (vv. 5-7)**

**John 16:4b-6 – These things I did not say to you at the beginning, because I was with you. 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.**

It is true that someone has mouthed the words “Where are you going?” in John 13:36 and 14:5. However, sometimes questions are objections rather than honest questions. Stephanie, Mackenzie, and I have recently discovered Downton Abbey. That illustrates how current I am on TV shows … I might engage them 15 years later. Since we are watching them there is some concern in my home that no one get ahead of the others nor cause unnecessary delays for the next installment. One might say, “I cannot tonight, there are other things I need to do.” A person responding “Like what?” is not really asking the one too busy for a go to outline what they are and why they are important right now. The question is a mild protest or statement of disappointment. I want you here so I can see the next episode.

That seems like the best explanation. The disciples were not asking honest questions as much as struggling with the words they heard. The loss is intense and the troubled soul is real. In the moment, they have a hard time thinking about all that God is doing.

That does not stop the Lord from sending the Spirit anyway. They might not fully understand, but the Lord will provide anyway.

Your life in the Spirit is not dependent on how aware you are of God’s plan. He provides because he cares.

**B. He comes as a helper**

**John 16:7 – But 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.**

The larger purposes come out. Now only is this a required step in the plan of redemption and an important moment in salvation history, it is for the disciples’ benefit and ours.

Friends, sometimes we wonder what it would have been like to walk with Jesus. We sometimes think that if only we could see the places, our faith would grow stronger.

* While not minimizing the significant of visits to Israel or contemplating walking the Emmaus road, we must not romanticize them.
* The advantage is now. That is Jesus’ point. We must appreciate the place we live in God’s plan and value the Spirit’s work in our lives.
* The third person of the Trinity has come to indwell us and do great things.

**II. The Spirit Convicts the World (vv. 8-11)**

**John 16:8 – And He, when He comes, will convict the world concerning sin and righteousness and judgment**

Last Sunday we were reminded that the world will persecute believers because they persecuted our master, Jesus.

* We learned that sometimes they hate us because of what we stand for --- Jesus and his truth.
* We learned that the Spirit will help us and be with us.

But that is not all. Verses 8-11 add truth not previously given.

* The Spirit of God is not merely a palliative care nurse helping us feel comfortable until we die.

Instead, the Spirit of God is a convicting agent against the world. The world might have its day, but it is not left unchecked.

John takes us into a courtroom.

* The rules of a court are different than in other locations.
  + Instead of speaking freely, you wait until you have permission to speak.
  + The topics under consideration are restricted.
  + You feel the intensity of the weight of your words differently than other contexts.

When the Spirit walks in the proverbial courtroom everyone knows the ultimate outcome. His convicting power comes in three areas:

**A. Concerning sin**

**John 16:9 – concerning sin, because they do not believe in Me…**

Have you ever tried to convince an unbeliever in Jesus that (1) they were a sinner and (2) that the sin was a big deal? It is impossible.

* The person simply does not believe you and then they are tempted to never see you the same again.
* You are nothing more than a judgmental self-righteous scum bag.
* It is not surprising that those who remain in their unbelief have something against you.

But that is not the way it always is. Sometimes the Spirit works.

* Even thought there might be many ways a person sins against God, the most important one and the only one mentioned here is a lack of belief in Jesus’ words and work.

This tells us something important about evangelism.

* The most important sin committed by the world is a rejection of Jesus.
  + People’s greatest sins are bad language, cutting you off in traffic, immorality, drunkenness, being rude, or uncaring to the concerns of others. These things might make our relationship with that person difficult, but they are not the most important sin.
  + What stands first is their acceptance or rejection of Jesus.

That then is our best place to begin. The Spirit is the acting prosecuting attorney against all who discredit the name of Jesus. That is their sin.

* It turns into our greatest appeal. We do not promise them an easy life, riches, or glory. We promise a relationship with Jesus.

Our hope is that the Spirit will bring that conviction in his time and his way resulting in repentance and faith in Jesus Christ.

* I don’t believe that everyone who comes to Jesus must remember every sin they committed.
* I don’t believe that everyone must immediately give up every sin to be converted.
* Their initial prayer of repentance is not primarily all the bad things they have done, but their lack of faith in Jesus as savior and Lord.

That is why Romans 10:9 say it so simply … “If you confess with your mouth Jesus as Lord and believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead, you shall be saved.”

* It is that simple.

Amazing Grace might be the most well-known hymn in the English speaking world. Amazing Grace, how sweet the sound, that saved a wretch like me. I once was lost but now am found was blind but now I see.

* John Newton penned those words. He became a follower of Jesus in 1748 at the age of 22. He continued in the slave trade until 1754, He became a pastor in 1764, but it wasn’t until the 1780s that he became the most significant voice against the slave trade in the British empire. He was William Wilberforce’s mentor. Newton spent the last 42 years of his life pastoring churches.
* Everything about Newton did not change in 1748. But his most important issue was settled – his salvation due to his new belief in Jesus.

**B. Concerning righteousness**

**John 16:10 – concerning righteousness, because I go to the Father and you no longer see Me…**

The Spirit also convicts the world about righteousness. The world has many standards of righteousness.

* In Philippians 3 Paul said he was righteous according to the law.
* In Titus we are not saved by works of righteousness.
* Isaiah says their righteousness was equivalent to feminine products during a ladies menstrual cycle.
  + Righteousness in the Bible is not always talking about something good.

The Spirit convicts the world that their righteousness is nothing. It is of no value.

* I suspect that many of you have tried to evangelize a person who did not believe they needed rescued.
* Their good deeds, their righteousness was sufficient for them to conclude that they were just fine.

John Bunyan, the writer of Pilgrim’s Progress, first attempted to get right with God through his own righteousness. He attended church, served, and conformed his behavior to that of other believers.

* In his own writing about his conversion he says, “But poor wretch as I was! I was all this while ignorant of Jesus Christ; and going about to establish my own righteousness; and had perished therein, had not God in mercy showed me more of my state.”

People perish in their own righteousness. Thankfully, the Spirit delivers from this.

* You and I will not convince people that their version of righteousness is of no value and they are in desperate need of the righteousness of Jesus imputed to their account.

However, and please notice this carefully … the reason the Spirit convicts concerning righteousness is that Jesus is going to the Father.

* He will no longer be there to live the example and to share the truth.
* D.A. Carson wrote, “Undoubtedly this kind of conviction is driven home to the world primarily through Jesus’ followers who, empowered by the Holy Spirit, live their lives in such growing conformity to Christ that the same impact on the world is observed as when Jesus himself lived out his life before the world”
* We cannot bring about this conviction on our own, but we can and must, through the work of the Spirit in our life, live as Jesus did.

The Spirit convicts regarding sin, righteousness, and …

* + **C. Concerning judgment**

**John 16:11 – concerning judgment, because the ruler of this world has been judged.**

Satan has been involved in this story. He entered Judas and influenced him to complete the betrayal process in 13:2.

* In the hours to come the religious leaders and the Romans will join Satan in making a wrong judgment concerning Jesus.

All who reject Jesus are aligning with Satan, the religious leaders, and the Romans.

* This does not mean every unbeliever is as bad as those characters.
  + It means they are aligned on their view of Jesus.

In that sense, when Jesus went to the cross, rose again, and ascended to heaven Satan was vanquished. Judgment occurred but final sentencing still awaits his return.

* That is also true for those aligned with him regarding Jesus. They need to know.

I assign our seminary students to listen to the great debate. It is a 1985 debate between Gordon Stein and Greg Bahnsen regarding the existence of God. The debate had a clear winner.

* Bahnsen destroyed Stein because Stein could not explain how a materialistic worldview could have universal laws of logic, morality, and science.
* Despite the clear victory over 2 hours of detailed argument, few, if any of the unbelievers in the room converted.

At the same time, Billy Graham would speak for 35-40 minutes. He did not develop complicated arguments, show how other worldviews cannot possibly explain the world, or rattle off the writings of key philosophers and thousands trusted Christ.

The only logical explanation is this: The active convicting power of the Holy Spirit.

How might we respond to this?

1. We can be encouraged that the world’s attitude is not left unchecked. There will be hostility to Jesus and his followers, but there is also an active Spirit providing help and convicting the world of sin, their version of righteousness, and judgment.
2. Allow the Spirit to work in your life so that you are shining the light of the gospel to your part of the world. The Spirit’s coming now places a responsibility on you and me.
3. Speak about the one sin that everyone must address. The sin of failing to acknowledge Jesus and his work. Our church has evangelistic events like VBS, Living Nativity, the Good Friday Service, Christmas Eve Services, and the Taste of Christmas. This fall we hope to add Lifewise to that list. But we also have pre-evangelism events like the Community Picnic or Trunk or Treat. None of that replaces personal invitations and evangelism. I estimate that roughly 65% of Lafayette has no relationship with Jesus.
4. Join our church staff in pray for the lost. We need the Spirit to convict. We meet monthly and we pray that God would draw people to himself.

If you do not have a person relationship with Jesus then you have no helper and you will not be effective in evangelism because you need a new view of Jesus. I urge you to trust him and his work as your only hope of heaven.

**III. The Spirit Guides in Truth**

**John 16:12-13a – I have many more things to say to you, but you cannot bear them now. But when He, the Spirit of truth, comes, He will guide you into all the truth; for He will not speak on His own initiative, but whatever He hears, He will speak…**

We have seen a similar promise in 14:25-26, then in 15:26-27. The truth that the Spirit guides in today is the Scripture.

**A. He enables a believer to know what is true**

Carson wrote, “The notion of ‘guidance’ in all truth has nothing to do with privileged information pertaining to one’s choice of vocation or mate, but with understanding God as he has revealed Himself, and with obeying that revelation…” – D. A. Carson, *John (PNTC)*, 540.

In that sense, the Spirit is required to help people accept what Scripture says is the Word of God. Until the Spirit motivates in that way, people will continue to treat it as an interesting book.

**B. Through Christ, He enables us to live out that truth**

Again, we are not talking about special information or direct revelation. We are talking about the Spirit bringing the Word to our mind and heart to motivate us to live faithfully. We never want to minimize the Spirit’s role in a Christian’s life, but neither do we want to disconnect that role from the Scriptures that the Spirit inspired.

While hardly an unusual application, I encourage you to be active enough in the Word that you could answer quickly the question, What are you studying? How is it affecting you?

* I have spent the last few weeks reading Eccleasiastes and a commentary that goes with it.
* I wanted to understand Solomon’s thinking process. How did he move from one point to another and reach his ultimate conclusion? Along with that conclusion, what were some of the practical expresssions? On a different day I might share some of these.

Maybe you need a lot more truth. I am glad that we do not have Sunday night services every week. However, when I was a teenager and college student I did attend Sunday night. The Spirit used God’s truth to change and transform me. You need something too.

**IV. The Spirit Makes Much of Christ**

**John 16:13b-15 – *He will disclose to you what is to come. He will glorify Me, for He will take of Mine and will disclose it to you. All things that the Father has are Mine; therefore I said that He takes of Mine and will disclose it to you*.**

We have seen that Jesus came to glorify the Father by doing exactly what the Father wanted. Jesus tells us that he did not speak of his own initiative, but only as directed by the Father. This is how Jesus could say that his words matched the Father’s and knowing Jesus was equivalent to knowing the Father.

The Spirit does something similar. He takes from Jesus and works in such a way that Jesus receives glory. The Spirit makes much of Christ so that the unbeliever places his or her faith in Jesus, but the believer becomes more in the image of Christ.

As you properly respond to the Spirit’s work in your life, you will become increasingly like your savior. That is the final point of application this morning.

* God could have decided to save us and take us.
* Instead he decided to save us, give us his Spirit, and make us his representatives designed to take his message to our portion of the world.
  + We will always be accused of being hypocritical because those accusations are at least partially true.
  + But our task is not to cower in fear or run and hide. It is to allow this gift of the Spirit to make us more like Jesus so that we might reflect his love and character to others.

Pray

* That we would appreciate this great gift of the Spirit
* That the Spirit would bring about conviction in Lafayette and people would be receptive to the gospel.
* That we would read the Word faithfully so that the Spirit continues to guide us through our ever growing understanding of his Word.
* That we would be receptive to the Spirit’s leading that we would more faithfully reflect Jesus to those around us.

**Communion Service**

The Spirit could not come until Jesus ascended. Jesus could not ascend until he completed the Father’s mission. That involved the cross. We celebrate the Lord’s table until our savior returns.

For quite some time now our practice has been silence during the passing of the bread and singing when we pass the cup. Let me explain how I think about that.

* During the bread each of us have a chance to examine ourselves, to pray, and to confess what is needed. It can also be a time of commitment … commitment to live more faithfully.
* During the cup we sing praising the Lord for his forgiveness, righteousness applied to our account, and thanking the Lord that we can worship him until he comes.

I hope that becomes your pattern as you reflect each time we have communion.

Ask the Men to come forward.

We practice open communion. That means you are invited to join us as long as two conditions are true. (1) You have a saving relationship with Jesus for the entire ceremony is founded upon the night Jesus was betrayed to complete the mission of the cross; and (2) You have properly examined yourselves. Read 1 Cor 11:20-22 and 27-34. That means you do not need to be a member of Faith Church to join.

1 Corinthians 11:23-26 …

* Bread vv. 23-24a … Praying to my right … When they return vv. 24b
* Cup v. 25a … Praying to my left … When song ends vv. 25b-26

Pray