



# THE HOLY SPIRIT'S COMFORT

After Jesus revealed to His apostles that He was leaving, He immediately promised to send the Holy Spirit to them. This promise towered above all else that Jesus had told them and embodied one of the greatest messages that Jesus gave His apostles in the upper room.

After His resurrection, Jesus departed. Ten days later, on the Day of Pentecost, the kingdom of God came. On that historic day, the apostles were filled with the Holy Spirit as they received the

## John 14

*“I will ask the Father, and He will give you another Helper, that He may be with you forever; that is the Spirit of truth, whom the world cannot receive, because it does not see Him or know Him, but you know Him because He abides with you and will be in you.*

*“I will not leave you as orphans; I will come to you” (vv. 16–18).*

baptismal measure of the Spirit. Immediately, the apostles embarked upon the work of enlarging the kingdom of God throughout the world. So basic and enduring was their work that it was referred to in glorious, far-reaching terms. Jesus had earlier said of the apostles, “Truly I say to you, that you who have followed Me, in the regeneration when the Son of Man will sit on His glorious throne, you also shall sit upon twelve thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel” (Matthew 19:28). Paul later wrote that the household of God was “built on the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Christ Jesus Himself being the corner stone” (Ephesians 2:20). Obviously, this foundational work that the apostles had to do would require nothing short of divine strength, inspired guidance, and holy companionship for its fulfillment.

Specifically, what did this promise that Jesus made to the apostles mean to them? What does it mean to us? What comfort was to be theirs through the Holy Spirit?

## DIVINE HELP

*He would provide, first, the comfort of divine help.* Jesus said, “I will ask the Father, and He will give you another Helper” (14:16a). The word “Helper” is applied to the Holy Spirit twice in this brief discourse about His coming (14:16, 26). The Greek word for “Helper” is *παράκλητον* (*paraklēton*), which is the same word that is used to describe Jesus in 1 John 2:1.

Jesus referred to the Holy Spirit as “another Helper,” One with the same characteristics He Himself had exhibited. The Spirit was to offer some of the same types of guidance that Jesus had provided.

The apostles would not be able to do their unique work without the help of the Holy Spirit. Their work in the kingdom was too significant, too divine, and too eternal to be done by human strength alone. With only a glance, the apostles could see that the work which Christ had given them to do was too big for them. They needed someone stronger than themselves to work alongside them. Christ assured them that the Holy Spirit was the Helper they needed.

## ABIDING PRESENCE

*In addition, the Holy Spirit would bring the apostles the comfort of an abiding presence.* Jesus promised, “I will ask the Father, and He will give you another Helper, that He may be with you forever” (14:16a).

He was saying to them, "You will have this comfort from now on." His words were vivid: "I will not leave you as orphans; I will come to you" (14:18).

The Spirit would abide in them and, to some degree, take the place of Jesus. The Lord told His followers, "I will come to you" (14:18), meaning that He would abide with them in the person of the Holy Spirit.

The apostles had leaned upon the personal presence of Jesus for the last three years. They believed that, if the Lord was with them, not even death could hurt them. They had seen Him raise Lazarus from the dead. They had watched Him still the storm on Galilee. They had been present to see Him cast out unclean spirits and feed the multitudes. Having had such experiences with Jesus would make His departure from them all the more heart-wrenching. Probably, they could not imagine life without Him.

### **INSPIRED GUIDANCE**

*Third, the Holy Spirit would bring them the comfort of inspired guidance.* Jesus referred to the Holy Spirit as "the Spirit of truth" (14:17). He further said, "But the Helper, the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in My name, He will teach you all things, and bring to your remembrance all that I said to you" (14:26). The Holy Spirit's help was to be twofold, reaching back so they could remember what they had learned and reaching forward to provide additional truth. The Spirit's instruction would enable them to do the preaching and teaching that they were being called upon to do.

Nothing is as reassuring as knowing that we have the truth from God. The apostles needed this assurance, and so do we. The Holy Spirit, by inspiration, gave the truth to the apostles. Through study and faithful acceptance of the inspired writings, the truth has been made known to us. When we stand in the truth of God, we stand in the comfort of the Holy Spirit.

### **UNFAILING CONTINUANCE**

*Fourth, the Holy Spirit brought them the comfort of unailing continuance.* The Holy Spirit had al-

ready been working through the apostles. Jesus said, "But you know Him because He abides with you and will be in you" (14:17b). They had seen Him in the life of Jesus and had preached, taught, and worked miracles through Him; but in a short time He would come upon them more fully and abide with them throughout the Christian age. When the baptismal measure of the Spirit fell upon the apostles, they would be able to pass the gifts of the Spirit on to others. By these gifts the early church would be sustained. Further, the Holy Spirit would abide in every Christian as a pledge of redemption from the Father (Acts 2:38; 1 Corinthians 6:19, 20). The Holy Spirit was to abide personally with the apostles and with all Christians throughout the rest of time. When Jesus took His seat on the right hand of the Father, the Holy Spirit was to take up residence in the hearts of Jesus' followers.

### **CONCLUSION**

As Jesus prepared His apostles for His death, He gave them the greatest of assurances. He promised to send the Holy Spirit, with His comfort of help, personal presence, revelation, and continuance. Indirectly, the fulfillment of this promise is extended to us. The Holy Spirit, through His dwelling within us and the revelation He has given to us, provides the help we need. Our Lord's promise of the Spirit stands as one of the greatest promises Jesus made for the Christian age.

Eddie Cloer

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*"When the day of Pentecost had come, they were all together in one place. And suddenly there came from heaven a noise like a violent rushing wind, and it filled the whole house where they were sitting. And there appeared to them tongues as of fire distributing themselves, and they rested on each one of them. And they were all filled with the Holy Spirit and began to speak with other tongues, as the Spirit was giving them utterance" (Acts 2:1-3).*

*"So the church throughout all Judea and Galilee and Samaria enjoyed peace, being built up; and going on in the fear of the Lord and in the comfort of the Holy Spirit, it continued to increase" (Acts 9:31).*