



G R A C E

REFORMED BAPTIST CHURCH

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THE GOSPEL OF JOHN

Sermon Notes

The Coming of the Holy Spirit, Part III

John 15:25-31

April 16, 2006

BACKGROUND

- ❑ The Gospel of John gives the reader the greatest understanding of the Person and work of the Holy Spirit, compared to the Synoptics.
- ❑ Theologians often refer to the five *Paraclete* passages here in the Gospel of John:
 - 14:16-17
 - **14:26**
 - 15:26-27
 - 16:7-11
 - 16:12-15

Verses 25 – 26

- ❑ Jesus begins this section with the words, “These things I have spoken to you while abiding with you.”
 - This statement emphasizes Jesus’ current physical presence [‘while abiding with you’]; spoken in contrast to His imminent departure via the Cross and the subsequent sending by the Father and the Son of the Holy Spirit.
- ❑ Immediately following His statement concerning His personal “abiding with” His disciples, Jesus states, “But the Helper, the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in My name...”
 - This is the second of the “Paraclete” passages of the Gospel of John.
 - The NASB translates “Paraclete” here as “Helper.”
 - Once again (Recall John 14:16), it is difficult to find an English equivalent to the word Paraclete.
 - However, Jesus calls the Holy Spirit the Paraclete, and then explains **what He will do**.

- But, first, Jesus says that the Paraclete will be sent “in My [Jesus’] name.”
- Jesus is said to have come in the Father’s name (John 5:43; 10:25); now, the Holy Spirit is said to come in Jesus’ name.
 - The reason for this, that the Holy Spirit is sent “in Jesus’ name”, may have something to do with the meaning of the name of Jesus – **Yahweh is my salvation**.
 - Therefore, one of the primary tasks of the Holy Spirit is to apply the gift of salvation to God’s people – that is the gift of salvation secured through work of Jesus Christ in His life, death, and resurrection.
- Notice, too, in this Verse, the working of the Persons of the Trinity: the **Father**, send the **Holy Spirit**, in the name of the **Son** Jesus Christ.
- But Jesus makes it very clear *in this context* what the role of the Holy Spirit will be: “He will teach you all things, and bring to your remembrance all that I said to you.”
 - Jesus mentions two interrelated roles of the Holy Spirit: (1) to teach you all things, and (2) bring to your remembrance all that I said to you.
 - It is very important to understand that the Holy Spirit is a **teacher**, and will teach the disciples *by bringing to remembrance* all that Jesus has said.
 - In other words, the “all things” that the Holy Spirit will teach the disciples will be the things that Jesus has said.
 - One scholar translated “all things” as “all that you will need to know.”
 - Leon Morris writes, “This does not mean that He [the Holy Spirit] will make new revelations; rather he will bring back to the disciples’ memory all the things that Jesus had told them.”
 - John has already stated in this Gospel that there were things that the disciples would remember and understand only **after the Resurrection of Jesus Christ** (2:19-22; 12:16).
 - The context of this Verse, like always, is critical. Jesus is not explaining [in this context] the teaching [and remembrance] role of the Holy Spirit for all Christians of all generations [although the Holy Spirit does teach and call to remembrance Scripture for us today]; rather, Jesus is speaking directly to His eleven disciples concerning the role of the Holy Spirit in *their* lives.

- The reason this is important, in this context, is that we, as believers in the Lord Jesus Christ “are of God’s household, having been built on the foundation of the apostles and prophets...” (Ephesians 2:19-20)
 - Therefore, the teaching of the Holy Spirit would ensure the truthfulness of the testimony we would receive from the disciples and prophets, guaranteeing the faithfulness of their witness to the words of Jesus Christ Himself.
- Lastly, notice the **consistency between the teaching of the Holy Spirit and the words of Jesus.**

Verse 27

- ❑ Jesus, now tells them, in light of His departure, He leaves them with Peace.
- ❑ The word for peace is *eirene*, εἰρήνη in the Greek, which is equivalent to *shalom* in Hebrew.
- ❑ Peace is depicted throughout the Old Testament as one of the primary characteristics of the messianic kingdom (Numbers 6:26; Psalm 29:11; Isaiah 9:6-7; 52:7; 54:13; Ezekiel 37:26; Haggai 2:9).
- ❑ Yet, the New Testament declares that this has been fulfilled (Acts 10:36; Romans 1:7; 5:1; 14:17).
- ❑ The world define peace negatively, i.e. the absence of conflict or war.
- ❑ However, true peace is positive, something that is given by God, and God alone.
- ❑ This is why Jesus says, “My peace **I give to you**; not as the world gives do **I give to you.**”
- ❑ Therefore, the Jews are still looking for the messiah, partly because there is still war, and their understanding [not the biblical understanding] of peace has yet to be fulfilled.
- ❑ Notice, also, that Jesus says, “**My peace** I give to you...”

The peace of Jesus Christ is that which comes only through imputation of his righteousness to our lives – that righteousness that was perfectly displayed in His life, death, and resurrection.

- ❑ He also says, “not as the world gives do I give to you.”
- ❑ As with all that Jesus does, the peace He give is fundamentally different from the “peace” the world offers.
- ❑ For the world, peace is [theoretically] the absence of conflict, and people of the world spend lifetimes trying to find this “peace”; yet, they NEVER do.

- ❑ Jesus offers a peace that is radically different than what the world is looking for: “Jesus, through the Spirit he would send, offers his followers poise and resolve in the midst of discomforting circumstances.”
- ❑ THIS, this world cannot offer.
- ❑ As a song by Scott Krippayne says, “Sometimes he calms the storm, and other times He calms His child.”
- ❑ Peace in the midst of adversity – this is the mark of the peace of Christ.
- ❑ **Furthermore, there is no peace without dealing with sin.**
- ❑ **Therefore, the world cannot offer peace. Read Jeremiah 6:13-15:**

“From the least of them even to the greatest of them,
 Everyone is greedy for gain,
 And from the prophet even to the priest
 Everyone deals falsely.
 They have healed the brokenness of My people superficially,
 Saying, ‘Peace, Peace,’
 But there is no peace.

- ❑ Interestingly, during the first century, when Jesus spoke these words, the Roman Empire was experiencing the Pax Romana, or the “peace of Rome” – yet, this was not peace.
- ❑ Regardless of what politicians or the President say, there will NEVER be peace, in the Middle East, or anywhere, apart from the redemptive, salvific work of Jesus Christ.
- ❑ However, many Christians claim the peace of God concerning personal choice, saying, “I have a *peace* about it” or “I *feel* at *peace* with the situation.”
 - The reason for this is that we often make up our mind concerning a decision, and then claim, after the fact, the “peace” of God concerning the situation – yet, this is no different from the “peace” of the world.
- ❑ Yet, the peace of God will ALWAYS be consistent with His Word.
 - We, as Christians, must be willing to challenge one another on this truth. Let us not flippantly claim the “peace of God” when it is often simply our personal desires.
- ❑ This is why the teaching of Jesus concerning the Paraclete, in this context, is also so important. The means of Jesus applying *His peace* to our lives is through the *giving of the Holy Spirit*.

- ❑ Therefore, the peace of God (as Jesus calls it “My peace”) bears the characteristics of Christ Himself. His peace must be consistent with the truth of Scripture; but it is also more than an emotional feeling – it is a sustaining, abiding peace [just as Christ abides with us] that the world cannot explain – such peace can never be conjured up by anyone.
- ❑ This is why the Apostle Paul promises, in Philippians 4:7 “the peace of God, which transcends all understanding.”

Verse 28

- ❑ This Verse has formed the foundation for many of the most popular heretical movements throughout the history of the Christian Church.
- ❑ The First Ecumenical Council, the Council of Nicaea in 325, condemned the Arians, who believed that this Verse taught that Jesus Christ was ontologically subordinate to, or less than the Father.
 - In other words, they believed that Jesus Christ was not fully God, like the Father...that Jesus Christ was, in fact, a lesser god than the Father.
 - NOTE: Modern day Arians include the Jehovah’s Witness
- ❑ Yet, this Verse is NOT saying that Jesus Christ is less of a God than the Father – they are EQUAL ontologically.
- ❑ To begin with, a United States soldier could accurately say, “The Commander in Chief of the United States [the President] is greater than I.”
 - Yet, no one would every take this to mean that the President was more of a person, more of a human being than the soldier!
 - It is simply that the soldier is less than the President in his current role, as a soldier in the military.
- ❑ Such is the case with Jesus Christ, the Son of God. He is functionally subordinate to the will of the Father, so He can properly say, “The Father is greater than I.” However, He is equal to the Father in His essence, i.e. Jesus, like the Father, is fully God.
- ❑ But, in the context of this passage, Jesus is saying more than this.
- ❑ As the Incarnate Son of God, Jesus has “voluntarily given up the free exercise of certain divine attributes in accordance with His humanity.”
 - In other words, Jesus is still sovereign, still omnipresent, yet He chooses, because of His human nature, not to exercise these attributes.
 - Further, the brilliant, magnificent, unspeakable glory that Jesus shared with His Father before the Incarnation is “hidden” in His incarnate state.
 - So, the Father is also “greater” than the Son in that, while the Son’s glory is “hidden” during His earthly ministry, the Father’s is beyond comprehension.

- ❑ Therefore, Jesus is basically telling His disciples that if they loved Him, they would rejoice that Jesus is returning to the glory He once shared with His Father. In other words, when we love someone, we want what is best for them.
- ❑ As D.A. Carson states, “If Jesus’ disciples truly loved him, they would be glad that he is returning to his Father, for he is returning to the sphere where he belongs, to the glory he had with the Father before the world began (17:5), to the place where the Father is undiminished in glory, unquestionably greater than the Son in his incarnate state. To this point the disciples have responded emotionally entirely according to their perception for their own gain or loss. If they had loved Jesus, they would have perceived that this departure to his own ‘home’ was his gain and rejoiced with him at the prospect. As it is, their grief is an index of their self-centeredness.”
- ❑ Also, had the disciples truly known Jesus, they would have realized that His gain would be their gain.

Verse 29

- ❑ Once again, Jesus repeats the words of John 13:19, declaring His sovereign understanding of the future.
- ❑ In Scripture, this is often the distinguishing characteristic between the true God of the Bible and the false idols of the nations (see Isaiah 44).

Verse 30

- ❑ The words of Jesus reveal that the Satan is, within the sovereign plan of God, behind the crucifixion of Jesus Christ. He is called “the ruler of the world.”
- ❑ The phrase, “he has nothing in Me” is a way of expressing the legal phrase, “he has no claim on me” or “he has nothing over me.”
 - The reason for this is that Jesus is not of this world, and Satan is the ruler of it.
 - Further, Jesus is sinless; therefore, there is no legitimate charge that Satan can bring against Jesus
 - Notice the parallel with Romans 8, where the Apostle Paul states, “Who will bring a charge against God’s elect?”
 - Since we, as believers in the Lord Jesus Christ, are *in Christ*, Satan cannot bring a charge against us either, as the righteousness of Jesus Christ has been imputed to us.

Verse 31

- ❑ Jesus concludes by telling His disciples of His love for the Father.
- ❑ Just as Jesus has said [“If you love Me, you will keep My commandments”] that obedience is the mark of true love, so Jesus demonstrates this truth with His obedience to the will of the Father.
- ❑ “I love the Father, I do exactly as the Father commanded Me.”
- ❑ **Therefore, this further reveals that the crucifixion is not a sign of defeat or inability of Jesus Christ; rather, it is a reflection of the love and obedience He has for the Father.**
- ❑ “The world may know” this truth, because the Father will vindicate the Son at the resurrection! [Although there are passages that say that Jesus “takes up His life again...” as well].
- ❑ Finally, Jesus says, “Get up, let us go from here.”
 - It is possible that Jesus leads His disciples out of the Upper Room and toward the Garden of Gethsemane.
 - They would have, likely, passed by vineyards, providing the background for the Vine and Branches discourse of Chapter 15.