

Giving Peace and Truth
John 14:22-31
Sermon Outline

Introduction: According to Jesus, we are better off spiritually now that he is gone. The reason for this is the Holy Spirit, who came after he departed.

I) What does the Spirit do for us?
He brings God's powerful love into our present lives

A) v. 23: *...we will come to him and make our home with him*

- We are by nature strangers to heaven
- The Spirit ushers us in the door, brings us to the table, shows us around the city of God...
- He teaches our hearts about Jesus (v. 26) and gives us peace (v. 27)

B) He teaches our hearts about Jesus

vv.25-26 ...he will teach you all things and bring to your remembrance all that I have said...

- A promise to two groups: the apostles and us

1) The promise to the apostles: The New Testament

2) The promise to us: "Special Delivery letters"

- The difference between a good sermon and a great sermon is the Holy Spirit

C) He brings us peace

v. 27 ...my peace I give you. Not as the world gives...

1) The world's peace depends on circumstances

- The Spirit's peace "passes all understanding" (Phil 4:7)

2) Romans 5:1: *Therefore, since we have been justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ*

- "Objective" peace that leads to "subjective" peace that is independent of circumstances

3) The Holy Spirit brings Romans 5:1 from our heads to our hearts

II) How do we experience the Holy Spirit more fully?

A) Obedience:

v. 23 ...If anyone loves me, he will keep my word, and my Father will love him, and we will come to him

B) Application: Push past a narrow obedience

1) What, according to Jesus, is the gospel Message?

- *Repent, for the kingdom of God is at hand*
- The mission of Jesus (and therefore of the Spirit) is broader than we tend to think

2) If we want to experience the Spirit, we must go where Jesus is active

- Love those who cant or won't repay
- Get involved with people who are not like you
- Think as Jesus would about the culture and values of your workplace

3) This is hard. We need help from each other

Final story: William Wilberforce's 45 year battle against slavery. John Wesley's early word of encouragement: *Unless God has raised you up for this very thing, you will be worn out by the opposition of men and devils, but if God be for you who can be against you? Are all others together stronger than God? Oh, be not weary in well-doing. Go on in the name of God and in the power of his might...*

Questions for Reflection this Week

- 1) Who is better off spiritually: The disciples during the time of Jesus' earthly ministry or we who have never seen Jesus? As you formulate your answer compare Simon Peter on the night of Jesus' trial and Simon Peter on the Day of Pentecost.
- 2) Though Jesus does not mention the Holy Spirit in John 14:23, he is describing his ministry. What, according to Jesus, does the Spirit do for us according to vs. 23? Think or talk about ways you have experienced this ministry.
- 3) What does Jesus promise the disciples in vv. 25-26? When and how, for them, did Jesus fulfill this promise? How are we beneficiaries of the promise Jesus made to the disciples? [Galatians 1:11-17, Ephesians 2:20, 2 Timothy 1:13-14 should be helpful].
- 4) Vv. 25-26 is also a promise to us, living 2000 years after the apostles. The Holy Spirit brings the truth of Scripture from our heads to our hearts. Recall and share stories in which he has done this for you (Holy Spirit "Special Delivery" letters). Spend some time in prayer thanking him for making Jesus and the Father real to you and asking him to keep doing so.
- 5) Compare the "peace that the world gives" (a peace dependent upon circumstances) with the "peace that passes understanding" (a peace that arises despite circumstances--Phil 4:7). Recall and share experiences in which you have known the peace that the Spirit gives. What happened? Why/how did you experience this peace?
- 6) Romans 5:1 speaks of "objective" peace—the peace that arises from the fact that God has justified us on the basis of what Jesus did at the cross for us. To justify means to declare, "Not guilty." For God to declare us "not guilty" is for him to say that, as far as he is concerned, the hostilities between him and us are over forever. We may feel anxious, or guilt ridden, or unsafe. But what we feel has nothing to do with what is real as far as God is concerned. Spend some time thanking God for the fact of "objective" peace and asking him to give you "subjective" peace (that is, the experience of peace) because of it.
- 7) Discuss or reflect upon the following statement: "We may know Romans 5:1 'in our heads.' But when the Holy Spirit teaches it to our hearts, peace begins to flood our experience. We can be late for work, we can be deeply wounded by someone we love, we can lose our job, we can fail an exam, we can lose our health, we can lose our life—and still be "OK" in a deep inward place. All anxiety arises from the desperate effort to hold on to, or to control, things that we don't really have power to hold on to or control. The peace of the Spirit arises when we know, thanks to the cross, that we are in the loving hands of the Father and the Son, Persons who control for our good those things we once foolishly tried to control."
- 8) According to Jesus in John 14:22-23, the way out of spiritual doldrums is not to rush about for some fresh spiritual experience (say, speaking in tongues, or finding a more spiritual worship experience). The way out is obedience ("If anyone loves me and keeps my word..."). How does this way of thinking change your thinking? Where is there an obvious area of disobedience that needs attending to?
- 9) One of the reasons that our spiritual lives are boring is that our "obedience horizons" are too narrow. We figure that if we show up at church, have a regular devotional life, behave nicely to people, and refrain from living as if we are married until we are married—if we just do these things then our spiritual lives should be humming along. Our mistake and boredom arise from a much too narrow view of what the Holy Spirit is up to. He has come to continue, through us, the great transforming work that Jesus began—and that work includes the renewal of everything—changing hearts, true, but also overcoming poverty, injustice, sickness, ugliness, and ecological indifference worldwide. How might you push out the horizons of your own obedience, so that you are more fully engaged in the renewal that Jesus has come to bring?