

## XVII. The Holy Spirit in Biblical Perspective

### *Led by the Spirit*

#### “The Exaltation of Christ by the Holy Spirit”

John 15:26 – 16:15

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July 10, 2016 – Morning sermon

We will be looking at John 15:26 through John 16:15 as we continue to look at our Lord's last sermon from the Last Supper in the Upper Room but I'll open by just looking at the first couple of verses. By the way, the divisions of chapters and verses was not a part of writing the Bible but that was done later as kind of a help for us to have an address so that we could go to something or refer to something easily in our Bible. Most of the time I think this was so well done but here is a place where I wished the chapter division stopped at John 15:25 and then John 16 started where we pick up John 15:26. So in this study we'll look at these verses as a whole section trying to forget there is a “16” there. John 15:26–27 says [26] *But when the Helper comes, whom I will send to you from the Father, the Spirit of truth, who proceeds from the Father, he will bear witness about me. [27] And you also will bear witness, because you have been with me from the beginning.*

The grass withers, the flower fades, God's Word abides forever and by His grace and mercy may His Word be preached for you.

From the pastorate, there are a couple of trade secrets I'm going to expose to you today. One is that pastors get anonymous letters and emails. It's a pretty regular occurrence. This kind of opens up my opportunity to say something here and the first thing is that if you have ever sent me one I've never read it because anything that is anonymous I don't read. If there is no address on the outside of the envelope or the letter or email is not signed I don't read it. You may wonder why I don't read them. It's not because some may be critical for if a friend sends me a critical note I read because the Bible says ‘faithful are the wounds of a friend.’ I don't love the wounds but I love the friends who do it. I also don't read the letters that are signed ‘from a friend’ with no name by it. I don't toss it because it has something negative in it for I toss it because friends are never anonymous. There is no such thing as an anonymous friend, for friends love to let you know who they are. Friends are revealing and transparent.

In our last study of the Holy Spirit, Jesus told us He was our Friend and He wants us to know Him. I have some wounds for you and some healing balm for you but I want you to know Me, He says. One of the ways we know Him is that He gives us His Word. That tells us who He is. Another way we know Him is through the One He sends to us and knows Him best. He sends to us another Friend who allows Him to be with us to the end because He will be with you and that is the Holy Spirit.

Some say the Holy Spirit is the forgotten person of the Trinity. It is not so much that He is forgotten but that He is kind of unknown. He is kind of anonymous so Jesus wants to make sure that He is not anonymous and He won't be anonymous because He sends us Holy Spirit and He wants to make sure the Holy Spirit is not anonymous. I know when I talk to some people that the Spirit is anonymous to them when they say things like ‘I'm grateful for the Holy Spirit because we really need it’ yet the Holy Spirit is not an it but a he, a Person, the Third Person of the Trinity and all the majesty of His deity with all the equality with the Father and the Son. Those who grew up with the King James Version tend to refer to the Spirit as the Holy Ghost which almost sounds spooky or distant. So I am grateful Jesus says He is the Holy Spirit.

I do understand why back in that culture they said ‘Ghost’ but it means a little bit different to us today.

He is the Holy Spirit and now He is doing His best to tell us who He is and He knows He needs to teach us who He is because it is the Holy Spirit who is going to teach us who He is. He is our Friend. The Holy Spirit, the Companion of Christ, has been sent to us so that we will understand what it means to have Christ in us and to be in Christ. So He wants us to understand who He is by understanding who the Holy Spirit is and to do that He has to teach us.

Here is pastorate secret number two. To teach people you have to repeat things. That is why Peter said it was no trouble for him to remind them again of these things. The only problem is that most of us don’t think of it being a problem for the teacher to repeat but we’re troubled when they repeat. So how do you repeat and nobody knows you repeat it? You learn by repetition but you need to make sure no one knows you’re repeating because they are insulted if you repeat. For many of us we’ll say something and then two or three sermons later we’ll say it again.

Jesus, who is the greatest Teacher and Preacher of all, repeats when He preaches. But He doesn’t wait two sermons later to repeat because He does it in the same sermon. In fact, I’m about to get to a text where He has already said this in John 14 when He started the sermon. He is emphasizing this leaving and sending. He is telling them He has to leave and not to be sorrowful because it is to their advantage that He leave. Then He tells them one of the advantages and that is if He leaves He’ll send to them the Helper, the Spirit of Christ, the Spirit of Truth. This is leaving and sending. Let’s look at the text in John 15 and 16.

John 15:26–27 says [26] *But when the Helper comes, whom I will send to you from the Father, the Spirit of truth, who proceeds from the Father, he will bear witness about me.* [27] *And you also will bear witness, because you have been with me from the beginning.* Why does Jesus say ‘when’? It is because what is necessary to send the Helper is about to be accomplished. It is the victory of Christ for when He rises victorious He will be enthroned in the position to send Holy Spirit to us. Notice too that we don’t come to the Helper but the Helper comes to us so that we will come to Jesus. We see the whole Trinity of our salvation in verse 26. The Father has made the promise. The Son has achieved the foundation of the promise and then the Son sends to us the benefit of the promise which is the personal, presence and power of the Holy Spirit upon the believer and the church. We also see that not only is the Spirit the Helper but He is the Spirit of Truth so He is not anonymous. He is beginning to take on reality for us. He is the Sent One, the Counselor, the Teacher, the Paraclete, the One that comes along side of you, the Comforter and He will bear witness of Jesus.

So the Spirit will come to us from Jesus because Jesus has achieved the victory that fulfills the promise of the Father. When the Spirit gets to you He has one overriding objective and that is to bear witness of Jesus. Does He have many ancillary things that He will be doing underneath that to achieve that? Yes because He’ll be a Helper, Teacher, Revealer of Truth and all kinds of things but how do you know if He has won the victory in you? You will bear witness of Jesus. The Father sends the Son. The Son achieves the glorious victory for us. He ascends to heaven to fulfill the promise of the Father for our redemption by sending the Spirit to us. He sends the Spirit to us to bear witness to us of Jesus. Those who have the Spirit bear witness to Jesus and that’s how you know the Spirit-filled Christian. The Holy Spirit is relentlessly committed to bearing witness of Jesus to sinners. The result is a growing, relentless witness to Jesus from those who are filled with the Spirit.

Three of the things the Holy Spirit does to achieve His purpose of bearing witness of Christ are enumerated in this text. This allows us to see the majesty of Christ and then it helps us to be an instrument to communicate a Spirit-filled witness of Christ to a broken, helpless, hopeless world apart from Christ. The first one is found in John 16:1–4a which says John 16:1–4a says [1] *“I have said all these things to you to keep you from falling away. [2] They will put you out of the synagogues. Indeed, the hour is coming when whoever kills you will think he is offering service to God. [3] And they will do these things because they have not known the Father, nor me. [4a] But I have said these things to you, that when their hour comes you may remember that I told them to you.*

I want to start by putting this in a historical, reality context. Jesus is saying that it is to your advantage that He goes away because then He will send the promise of the Father, the Holy Spirit. We receive the Spirit because Jesus has won the victory. Jesus came from the Father to save His people from their sins. He doesn't go back to the Father until His mission is accomplished. So when He leaves that is the declaration that He has been victorious over sin, death, hell, the grave and Satan. He knows they will be sorrowful that He is gone but He will send His presence to them personally through the presence His Spirit, the Spirit of Christ, the Helper, the Spirit of Truth. I want to point this out to you by looking at Acts 2.

After Jesus has risen and has done His ministry to His Disciples, it says in Acts 1 that this will receive power *when*, not if, the Holy Spirit comes upon them. This literally means the Holy Spirit will overshadow them. Then they will be His witnesses which is the purpose of the Holy Spirit, in Jerusalem, Samaria, Judea and to the utter most parts of the world. So those who are filled with the Spirit will have power and the power is expressed through their relentless witness to Jesus, the One whom the Holy Spirit has brought them to. This isn't a time where when the Spirit comes they give Him a parade but Jesus tells them that people will come after them when this happens.

People will not only persecute and kill you because they are against Jesus but many will do it and say they are doing it for Jesus. Jesus is getting them ready for all of this will happen to each of the eleven men still in that Upper Room. In the name of God they are going to get killed, who are bearing witness to Christ. He will equip them for this. You don't hear any name and claim it gospel from Jesus. He says to them 'I name you and claim you and now they will come after you but I'm going to be with you. I will be with you by My Spirit.' This is the same Holy Spirit that was with Jesus in the womb and He'll be with you from your new birth. Jesus grew in wisdom, stature, favor with God and favor with man and the same Holy Spirit will grow you up in your transformed humanity as a saved sinner. The same Holy Spirit that thrust Jesus into the wilderness will lead you out into the battle into this world but will be with you to the end. That same Holy Spirit that led Jesus to the cross will lead you to die to yourself and live unto Him for He will bring you from death unto life in Jesus Christ. It is that ascended victorious Christ who will pour that Holy Spirit who was with Him upon you and you will receive power to be witnesses of Christ.

When they questioned Peter about this rushing wind, this presence of the Holy Spirit, speaking in languages they didn't know but people out there knew them in order for them to hear the Gospel in a language they needed to hear it, this is how Peter responds to them. Acts 2:32–33 says [32] *This Jesus God raised up, and of that we all are witnesses. [33] Being therefore exalted at the right hand of God, and having received from the Father the promise of the Holy Spirit, he has poured out this that you yourselves are seeing and hearing.* What they are seeing

and hearing is the result of Christ, leaving us victorious back to the throne of God and giving to us the purchased promise of the Father, our salvation sealed by the Holy Spirit who is upon us.

A big discussion going on among people where people are saying the Father sent the Son and the Son sends the Spirit so there must be an eternal subordination of Father, Son and Holy Spirit, are missing it. The equality of the Trinity is clear. The Trinity in its equality has made an eternal covenant and each Person of the Trinity has their responsibility. The Father gives His Son. The Son gives Himself and then the victorious Son gives us the Holy Spirit. What we have is our Triune salvation from Father, Son and Holy Spirit. Step one is the Father sends. Step two the Son comes, wins the victory and leaves, back to the Father. Step three in the name of the Father and the victory of the Son, the Spirit of Christ from the victory of Christ and the One who was with Christ, is now poured out upon us with one objection – that we would be witnesses of Christ because He comes to bring the Witness of the victorious Christ to us. How does He do this?

This is done through the three things that are enumerated in this text. The next one is in the next few verses in John 16:4a–7 which says [4a] *“I did not say these things to you from the beginning, because I was with you. [5] But now I am going to him who sent me, and none of you asks me, ‘Where are you going?’ [6] But because I have said these things to you, sorrow has filled your heart. [7] Nevertheless, 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.”*

Now the Holy Spirit will come ‘if I go’ and what is that? He goes when He wins the victory and as He ascends the Holy Spirit will come to you who is the Helper. It is also the Greek word Paraclete. It can be translated as lawyer, counselor, comforter, helper and basically means one who is called alongside. If you would have gone to court in those days you would have gotten a Paraclete and it wouldn’t have been someone you didn’t know very well. It would have been your best friend as your counselor or helper who could speak of you to the court. The eternal Companion of the Savior is the Holy Spirit. So when He goes He sends the One who knows the depths of the mind of God, the One who was with Jesus from the womb to His ascension and He brings you to Jesus and is with you. When the Spirit is with you then Jesus is with you to the end. He will overshadow you and be poured out upon you.

Have you ever thought about this? The Father authored this creation. Everything was created through the Son and then Genesis 1:2b says [2b] *And the Spirit of God was hovering over the face of the waters.* The Spirit overshadowed the creation to bring it into order. God sent the Son through the virgin to be born and He came into the world because the virgin was overshadowed by the Holy Spirit. Now the church, the body of Christ, the bride of Christ is to be a witness for Christ and that is through the church and the believer being overshadowed by the presence of the Spirit of Christ. He is upon you and in you that you might know Christ and make Christ known. So if victory is there the promise of the Father has been secured and the exalted Christ will pour His Spirit upon you. You will exalt Christ because He comes to bear witness to you. So He not only sends the Spirit as the lawyer, convincer, comforter alongside to bear witness to you of Christ but He does something else.

John 16:8–11 says [8] *And when he comes, he will convict the world concerning sin and righteousness and judgment: [9] concerning sin, because they do not believe in me; [10] concerning righteousness, because I go to the Father, and you will see me no longer; [11] concerning judgment, because the ruler of this world is judged.* Now the Spirit becomes your prosecutor. He comes to convict the world of sin, righteousness and judgment. What do the people of God do? They leave the world dominion to come to King Jesus. When we are

convicted of sins, we confess our sins to Christ because the Holy Spirit that convicts us also convicts us of His righteousness and that He has ascended in victory. We have a pure righteousness in Christ. We not only have forgiveness but acceptance.

Because of what Christ did on the Cross He provides for us a perfect righteousness that clothes us and He convicts us of judgment. Our judgment has been satisfied in Jesus. God's judgment over Satan, sin, death, hell and the grave has won the victory. They haven't been destroyed yet but they have been defeated and the judgment to come we do not fear because we are written in the Lamb's book of life. We have become convicted of that. So He comes to be our Lawyer alongside of us as our Defender but first of all He has to show us we're guilty.

I know you didn't plan to read this thinking 'I want to have some major conviction. I want to be convicted of sin.' I know we don't seek it but you will never come to Christ for forgiveness until you are convicted that you need it. The Prophet says 'Your prophets have been your liability because of two reasons. One is they did not expose your sin and two they did not exalt your Savior.' Jesus is the Savior of sinners and until I see my helplessness and hopelessness from the Helper, the Holy Spirit, I will not flee to Christ my Redeemer and I will not come to Him to be my Savior. So the Holy Spirit who comes to bear witness that Jesus saves sinners is the Holy Spirit that comes and convicts us of our sin, the perfect righteousness of Christ and the judgment that we no longer stand under because He has taken all of our condemnation. Those who reject the Holy Spirit's conviction of sin, righteousness and judgment will rage against God and those who belong to that Savior. So the Spirit will not bring them to Christ but into adversity against Christ, the message of the Gospel and His people.

Thirdly, the Holy Spirit comes as the Revealer of Truth, a Guide. John 16:12-15 says [12] *"I still have many things to say to you, but you cannot bear them now. [13] When the Spirit of truth comes, he will guide you into all the truth, for he will not speak on his own authority, but whatever he hears he will speak, and he will declare to you the things that are to come. [14] He will glorify me, for he will take what is mine and declare it to you. [15] All that the Father has is mine; therefore I said that he will take what is mine and declare it to you."* So the Holy Spirit will come to the Apostles and guide them into all the truth.

He points out two things here to them. Jesus says, 'One I will remind you of what I have said so that you will record it and two I will tell you of the things yet to come so that you will record it.' Thus we get our New Testament and the completion of the Scriptures. He will guide us into all the truth and then He'll stay with us to teach us the truth. He will guide you in understanding it. He not only reveals but He illuminates. I John 1:4 says [4] *And we are writing these things so that our joy may be complete.*

Here is the Old Testament telling us about Jesus. Jesus said 'you search the Scriptures because you think that in them you have eternal life but they bear witness of Me.' [27] *And beginning with Moses and all the Prophets, he (Jesus) interpreted to them in all the Scriptures the things concerning himself* (Luke 24:27). So the Old Testament is pointing to Him. Now He will send the Holy Spirit upon the Apostles reminding them of what He taught them when He was with them, communicating the things that are to come, so that now we have the New Testament that expounds what He has done. The Old Testament told us what He would do and the New Testament tells us what He has done and we have the truth. He will be with you to teach it to you.

I love history and I have one of the faults of a historian. All historians at heart are romanticists. There is always an age that we would rather live in. So what is the age that I would rather live in? I do have an age I'd rather live in but I wouldn't trade it for His call to live

for Christ in this age. This is where He has called me but I'm asking Him by the Holy Spirit to be faithful. I don't know how effective I'll be but I just want Him to help me be faithful. I will tell you privately the age I'd prefer to live in but I would never change it for the age He has called me to live in. I will tell you an age I'm glad I didn't live in and don't want to live in. That is the first century.

I hear people say they would want to be a New Testament Christian and go back to the first century. Which part, the heresy of the Galatians or the heresy of the Colossians (angel worship) or at the church of Corinth who divided up against Jesus because they were for Peter or Paul? That part of history doesn't really excite me at all and the biggest reason is because I wouldn't have the Bible yet for it's still being put together in the first century. I love everything after the first century when the Apostles finished and the Bible was complete. God is inerrant, infallible, efficient, sufficient Word and I'm glad I didn't live in a time that it wasn't yet all together. Another reason is I now have 1900 years of the Holy Spirit guiding people into the truth with my Bible and I'm so glad it didn't start with me. I have the Bible.

The hardest people to minister to are those who come to me and say "Harry, God told me." I'll say "What did He tell you?" They will tell me and then I'll say "God didn't tell you that." They will say "how dare you tell me that. How do you know He didn't tell me that?" I'll say "Because it is not in God's Word." 2 Timothy 3:16-17 says *[16] All Scripture is breathed out by God and profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, and for training in righteousness, [17] that the man of God may be complete, equipped for every good work.* I am so grateful I am not in need of the Holy Spirit revealing but now I am in need of His teaching. I have the Word of God. I know He hasn't taught everything yet but I have 1900 years that I can draw upon and learn from and I'm glad it doesn't start with me. It starts with the Holy Spirit who came to guide the Apostles into the truth. Here is the takeaway that sums up everything we have just studied.

The Holy Spirit sent from the exalted (victorious, triumphant) Christ, comes to bring us to the exalted Christ, and brings the exalted Christ to us that we might glorify and enjoy Him now and forever. I know you'll hear sermon after sermon or book after book that tells you what the Holy Spirit does and I know the Holy Spirit is multi-faceted and can multi-task but here is the one thing He does. He will bear witness of Christ. The one thing you know is that when someone is filled with Him they will bear witness of the exalted Christ. We can get exasperated because we want the Spirit to do this or that and He can do multiple things but the one thing He has come relentlessly to do is to bear witness of Christ to us that we will be filled with the power and presence of the Holy Spirit.

The Spirit has come to be alongside of you to bear witness as the Spirit of Christ. He is there to convict you of your sin, righteousness and judgment. He is there to overshadow you, guide you, and fill you that you might see the majesty and preeminence of Christ so that when you leave this time you will incessantly do what the Holy Spirit is doing for you. You'll just have to tell people about Jesus. Aren't you glad when the Holy Spirit does His convicting work that He does it personally, privately and powerfully?

Here is what I'm praying for where the Spirit will come and do His work. I want Him to come alongside of us, then convict us so that we'll go to the One whom He has come to bring us to. I'm glad the conviction of sin is personal and private because I don't want others to know but I am going to confess it. Then God will You put this together upon believer upon believer in churches and churches to churches so that we have an awakening of the Holy Spirit's convicting, bringing and sending ministry as He comes to us. May it spread throughout our whole land. O

God that is what I am asking and praying for and that is what I long to see the Spirit of the Living God do.

There is only one Vicar of Christ. The Vicar of Christ you will not find in any one place or ordained by any one denomination. The Vicar of the victorious Christ is Holy Spirit. He has come to bear witness to us to help us, come alongside of us, convict us and you'll know when He is filling you up because you will be as incessant about Jesus that He incessantly and relentlessly is to bring Jesus to you.

If you are around me long enough I'll talk about my wife, Cindy, my kids, my grandkids and if I'm not here I'll talk about the people of Briarwood. Have you ever noticed that you talk about who and what you love? When the Holy Spirit fills you, you'll talk about Jesus and you'll ask the Spirit to make you more like Him and to give you humility and boldness to tell others about Him. I don't care how many laws they pass or how elite the culture is or the institutions of the culture that would marginalize you and tell you that you can't speak, you have One who incessantly leads you to speak. No one can say 'Jesus is Lord' without the Holy Spirit and no one will stop saying 'Jesus is Lord' because of the Holy Spirit. The world's adversity does not stop the Holy Spirit's ministry to us to bear witness of Christ. The world's adversity only gives us more reasons and more platforms to lift high the One who is lifted up, will draw all men to Himself. Let's pray.

Prayer:

Perhaps today the Spirit is speaking to you to come to Christ. That is no accident friend. The Living Christ who is victorious has sent Holy Spirit to convict and come alongside of you to bring you to Christ. The Bride says 'come' and the Spirit says 'come.' Jesus has sent the Spirit through the Bride to say to you 'come.' Father, come to this Your church, help us, convict us in the name of the Victorious Christ, by the Vicar of Christ the Holy Spirit that in this world that is unraveling in front of us, they might see and hear the one message of grace and hope in Christ. Please Father, one Lord, one faith, one baptism, one God and Savior, O Christ, over all, Victor, in the name of Christ I pray, Amen.

Power Point

LIFE TAKEAWAY

The Holy Spirit, sent from the exalted Christ, comes to bring us to the exalted Christ, and brings the exalted Christ to us that we might glorify and enjoy Him now and forever.