



John 15:26-27

Abiding in the Holy Spirit

Mark Twain tells of the day the King and the Queen of a far off country were bringing their new little Prince home from the royal hospital. On the way home their carriage collided with a poor pauper's cart. In the humble vehicle the poor man was bringing his wife and new baby home from the midwife's house. In the confusion of the moment, the two couples picked up the *wrong* babies by mistake and the little Prince went home to be raised by the pauper and his wife.

As the baby grew into childhood, he was forced to go into the streets and beg for food. However, unknown to him the very streets he begged on belonged to him because they were the property of his *true* father. Day in and day out he would go to the palace and looking through the iron fence at the little boy playing there and he would say to himself, "Man, if only I were a Prince." Of course, he was the Prince! But he was not aware of that fact.

He lived his whole life in poverty because he didn't know who he really was since he didn't know "who" his father was.

How true this is of many Christians. It is easy to go through life doing the same thing. They have never taken time to find out to whom they belong. They have never realized who their real Father is. Ever since the day we were born spiritually, we became sons and daughters of the King of Kings and Lord of Lords! We are heirs of a royal throne. How sad to think we go through self imposed spiritual poverty and cheat ourselves out of the riches of God's marvelous grace. The riches are there whether we enjoy them or not. God the Father has made provision for every need in your daily walk with Christ.

Many "believers" are "unbelievers" when it comes to taking God at His word when He tells us who we are in Christ.

From the moment you believed on Christ, God has provided you with everything you need to live the Christian life.

JESUS PROMISED TO SEND THE *PARACLETE* TO HIS DISCIPLES.

Jesus promised His disciples a helper in John 15:26. "When the Helper comes, whom I will send to you from the Father, that is the Spirit of truth, who proceeds from the Father, He will bear witness of Me, and you will bear witness also, because you have been with Me from the beginning."

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Carefully note the context is "abiding" in Christ.

The secret of the Christian life is found in John 15:5. Jesus told his disciples, "I am the vine, you are the branches; he who abides in Me, and I in him, he bears much fruit; for apart from Me you can do nothing." This abiding in Christ and Christ abiding in us, and the coming of the Holy Spirit are intimately related. You cannot abide in Christ without walking in the Spirit. If there is no walking there is no abiding.

Abiding is a continuous thing. Your Christian life began with a once and for all commitment of your life to Christ. You live it one day at a time. Begin every morning with a fresh commitment of your life to Christ. Make it a simple prayer, "Lord Jesus, I give this day to you. It is yours. Live your life through me." Abide in Him. Let Him abide in you. It is a choice I make daily and then through out the day.

The Paracletos is coming to indwell His believers.

Who is this *Paracletos*? The word means "to call alongside to help." He is one who comes to aid in a court of justice. Jesus was the first Helper. Every function of Jesus performed the Holy Spirit also is seen performing in the Gospel of John. Both Jesus and the Holy Spirit teach truth, abides in the disciples, bears witness, come from the Father, the world knows neither of them. The *Paracletos* is not only like Jesus in nature; He is also like Jesus in activity. The Holy Spirit is the divine presence when Jesus' physical presence is taken away from the believers. The Holy Spirit is the continuing presence of Jesus with the believer.

Each generation of believers is as close to Jesus as the last. The *Paracletos* is the immediate link between Jesus and His disciples in every generation. The Comforter, Encourager or Helper abides or dwells in all true believers. The Apostle John wrote in First John 3:24, "And the one who keeps His commandments abides in Him, and He in him. And we know by this that He abides in us, by the Spirit whom He has given us." John went on to say, "By this we know that we abide in Him and He in us, because He has given us of His Spirit" (1 John 4:13).

He is also called the "Spirit of Truth" (15:26).

He guides us into truth of God's World. Jesus said, "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; and He will disclose to you what is to come" (John 16:13). He always points us to Christ. "He shall glorify Me; for He shall take of Mine, and shall 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. (16:14-15). The Holy Spirit never glorifies Himself. The Spirit is essentially self effacing. He does not seek His own glory. He will only glorify Christ and God the Father. Any movement that glorifies the Spirit instead of Christ is alien to the teachings of Jesus Christ about

Father. Any movement that glorifies the Spirit instead of Christ is alien to the teachings of Jesus Christ about the Spirit. He is the reveler of Jesus. He is the alter ego of Christ.

He will bear witness of Christ to the believer. The context is discipleship. His primary work is in the life of the believer.

He will enable us to bear witness to Christ. The result of our abiding in Christ will be obvious. Jesus says, "You will bear witness also, because you have been with Me from the beginning" (v. 27).

Jesus had to leave before the Helper could come (16:7).

Both Jesus and His Father are seen sending the *Paracletos*. In John 16:7 we see Jesus sending the Spirit. "But I tell you the truth, it is to your advantage that I go away; for if I do not go away, the Helper shall not come to you; but if I go, I will send Him to you." In 14:16, Jesus said the Father would send the Spirit in His name. "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." The Holy Spirit is another Helper of the same kind. Jesus is also called a *Paracletos*; He was a Helper of the Father.

The Spirit abides in the believer forever (14:16-20). His work in the believer is to produce an intimate love relationship with God. He leads us into truth. He applies the Word of God to our lives. He is a Comforter, Encourager, Helper who comes to our aid. He "is the Spirit of truth, whom the world cannot receive, because it does not behold 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. After a little while the world will behold Me no more; but you will behold Me; because I live, you shall live also. In that day you shall know that I am in My Father, and you in Me, and I in you" (vv. 17-20).

The Holy Spirit brings to mind God's truth. He causes you to remember His word and applies it to life situations (14:26). "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." What the disciples may have forgotten will be recalled to their memories. When they were called to teach and write the Gospels the Holy Spirit chose what to include in the Gospel. He caused them to remember events and to include them.

A number of years ago I was being called upon by our mission organization to consider an additional responsibility that would broaden my ministry to include several other mission agencies serving in Latin America. I was deeply burdened that I would make the right decision. It was critical to our over all ministry. I woke up that Thanksgiving Day with two passages of Scripture flooding my mind. Two verses filled my mind all day long. The Holy Spirit called to my conscious memory Jeremiah 33:3, "Call to Me, and I will answer you, and I will tell you great and mighty things, which you do not know." And how shall He do it? The other passage that filled my mind with peace was Zechariah 4:6, "'Not by might nor by power, but by My Spirit,' says the LORD of hosts."

A few months later as we made plans to return to Ecuador and to the new ministry, I was down on my knees beside the couch in prayer committing financial and ministry needs to the Lord. I stood up after prayer with perfect peace that the Lord was going to provide all our needs. That night at 9:15 two colleagues, Herb and Faye Kinard, called on the phone. Herb's opening words were, "We don't know what is happening in your life, but we were deeply impressed of God to call you." God the Holy Spirit was at work confirming His plan of ministry. God had been speaking to Herb and Faye through His Word, and they were submissive.

His teachings will always be in fullest harmony with what Jesus taught. He will not in any way contradict or replace what Jesus taught. The Holy Spirit is always Christocentric. The center and the circumference is

replace what Jesus taught. The Holy Spirit is always Christocentric. The center and the circumference is always Christ. Jesus and the Holy Spirit are always in perfect harmony. He indwells the believer and leads them in the right way. He leads and directs the believer into a fuller understanding of who Jesus is. He enables us to bear witness to others of Jesus.

The unbeliever cannot know Him. Spiritual truths are foolishness to them. An excellent example is the recent media coverage of the Southern Baptist Convention's commitment to the family. All four of the networks on prime time news sneered their faces and derided with their strident voices the statement on the marriage and family. Being spiritually dead they could not comprehend why we believe and accept family values based on God's Holy Word. Jesus said, "The Spirit of truth, whom the world cannot receive, because it does not behold Him or know Him, but you know Him because He abides with you, and will be in you" (John 14:17). Paul tells us in Ephesians 2:1-2 the unbeliever is spiritually dead. "And you were dead in your trespasses and sins, in which you formerly walked according to the course of this world, according to the prince of the power of the air, of the spirit that is now working in the sons of disobedience."

What then is the work of the Holy Spirit to those who are spiritually dead?

THE HOLY SPIRIT GIVES US SPIRITUAL LIFE (3:3, 5-7)

Physical birth and spiritual birth do not take place at the same time.

Jesus met Nicodemus, a Jewish religious leader one night. The conversation began by Nic telling Jesus what a wonderful teacher He was. Jesus' reply was, "Nick you are religious, but spiritually dead." Nic couldn't comprehend it. Jesus answered and said to him in John 3:3, "Truly, truly, I say to you, unless one is born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God."

Nicodemus said to Him, "How can a man be born when he is old? He cannot enter a second time into his mother's womb and be born, can he?"

Jesus answered, "Truly, truly, I say to you, unless one is born of water and the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God. That which is born of the flesh is flesh, and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit. Do not marvel that I said to you, 'You must be born again.' The wind blows where it wishes and you hear the sound of it, but do not know where it comes from and where it is going; so is everyone who is born of the Spirit" (John 3:3-8).

We are all still born spiritually. We are spiritually dead until the Holy Spirit regenerates us and give us spiritual birth.

The way into the kingdom of God is not by putting forth our best effort; it requires a completely different life. We must be born spiritually. It is a fresh new start, a new birth. It is free from the old life. It is the work of the Holy Spirit within us. Jesus is speaking of something completely new. The way to God is by regeneration brought about by the Holy Spirit. We do not enter a right relationship with God through our own energies or devising.

We enter God's family when the Spirit of God remakes us. John 6:63 tells us in the words of Jesus, "It is the Spirit who gives life; the flesh profits nothing; the words that I have spoken to you are spirit and are life." Because we are spiritually dead it is only the Holy Spirit of God who can bring lost sinners to believe in Jesus. Without that there is no Christianity. The Holy Spirit initiates spiritual life. It does not begin by a desperate human attempt to bring it about. It is not something we merit. We don't agonize for it. We cannot earn God's favor. The Holy Spirit regenerates the sinner by divine power. The new believer's life is

earn God's favor. The Holy Spirit regenerates the sinner by divine power. The new believer's life is characterized by God's presence and power.

John 16:7 -12 reveals the Spirit's work in the unbeliever.

Only the Spirit of God can cause a person to see his sinfulness and the righteousness of Christ brought about through the death of Christ on the cross. "But I tell you the truth, it is to your advantage that I go away; for if I do not go away, the Helper shall not come to you; but if I go, I will send Him to you. And He, when He comes, will convict the world concerning sin, and righteousness, and judgment; concerning sin, because they do not believe in Me; and concerning righteousness, because I go to the Father, and you no longer behold Me; and concerning judgment, because the ruler of this world has been judged. I have many more things to say to you, but you cannot bear them now."

I cannot convict a person of sin. If you and I try to convict people they bow up their fist and want to fight. They think it is a personal attack on them. However, when God the Holy Spirit puts His bony finger on sin we feel the heavy weight of God's wrath and judgment upon us. We become convicted of our evil, and He causes us to see the righteousness of Christ. We cannot do the work of the Spirit. We are doomed to despair if we try to do so.

Christ will always be exalted (vv. 13 -15).

"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; and He will disclose to you what is to come. He shall glorify Me; for He shall take of Mine, and shall 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." Sinners need a friend in God's court.

The new believer finds spiritual food and drink (7:37 -39).

John tells us that on the last day, the great day of the feast of the Tabernacles, Jesus stood and cried out, saying, "If any man is thirsty, let him come to Me and drink. He who believes in Me, as the Scripture said, 'From his innermost being shall flow rivers of living water.' But this He spoke of the Spirit, whom those who believed in Him were to receive; for the Spirit was not yet given, because Jesus was not yet glorified."

Are you appropriating the spiritual food God has provided for you? Are you drinking at His fountain? Are you eating His spiritual diet? That is the only way you can abide in Christ. You have to drink from His fountain. You have to drink His water. You have to eat His daily bread so you won't dry up like a withered branch and be severed.

Disciples need all the help they can get (20:21 -23).

John 20:21 -23 tells of an interesting experience the disciples had with Jesus after He has risen from the dead. It appears the disciples are all gathered with Jesus in a closed room. Jesus therefore said to them again, "Peace be with you; as the Father has sent Me, I also send you." And when He had said this, He breathed on them, and said to them, "Receive the Holy Spirit. If you forgive the sins of any, their sins have been forgiven them; if you retain the sins of any, they have been retained."

John does not say Jesus walked around the group breathing on each of them individually. The gift He gave was the gift for the group as a whole. It was a gift to the whole church. This is probably the group also mentioned in Luke 24:33ff. The gift is the Holy Spirit Himself. The gift was made to the group wholly, and not as individuals. The prophetic breathing was fulfilled on the day of Pentecost as recorded in Acts chapter

not as individuals. The prophetic breathing was fulfilled on the day of Pentecost as recorded in Acts chapter two.

What a privilege to proclaim the Gospel of Jesus Christ. The church does not do the forgiving; God does. The church can only proclaim the divine prerogative; God forgives. As we proclaim the Gospel people respond to the sacrifice of Christ and are completely forgiven of all their sins.

Right here today this passage of Scripture is being fulfilled in your hearing before our very eyes. There are some individuals who are reading this today who have believed God's word and accepted Christ as your personal Savior. You have come to know God's forgiveness. There are others who are reading this and their response is "no way," "man this is dumb," "who could be so foolish to believe that a man dying on a cross 2000 years ago could save me today?" If these are your thoughts, you are dead spiritually and eternally damned and separated from God. If you reject His message and His forgiveness, you will spend eternity in hell.

We simply declare what God has already done in Christ. The Spirit led church has the authority to preach the Gospel which either brings men to repentance and believe in Christ and therefore forgiveness, or else it leaves them unresponsive to the offer of forgiveness of their sin. How tragic to refuse the offer of God's forgiveness and be left in your sins for all eternity.

Do you know His forgiveness? Do you carry a weight of guilt, a heavy load you cannot walk away from?

Do you know His abiding presence in your daily life? Jesus said, "I will not leave you orphans." He is referring to the Holy Spirit. Jesus left this earth and went back to heaven so we could have the universal, spiritual presence of Christ. As the Father is present in the Son, so the Son is present in the Spirit. Christ came to bring God in concrete historical manifestation; the Spirit came to bring Christ in inner spiritual realization. The Holy Spirit is the power that makes Christ a living reality in our experience.

The Holy Spirit is the Spirit of Truth, and He has come to reveal Jesus as the Way, the Truth and the Life. Jesus is the ultimate reality of God. There is nothing to be known of God beyond the reality of His grace in Christ that saves. His work is to reveal Christ.

Have you been born spiritually? Have you come to an intimate love relationship with Jesus Christ? You can right now this moment by confessing to God that you are not what He wants you to be and believe that Christ died for you on the cross to give you eternal life.

If you need help in becoming a Christian here is [A Free Gift for You](#).

If you are a believer, how is your walk with Christ? Are you abiding in Him? Are you allowing Him to abide in you? Does your love for Him grow sweeter every day? Will you spend some time renewing your fellowship with Him?

Title: John 15:26-27 Abiding in the Holy Spirit

Selected passages from the Gospel of John on the Holy Spirit

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