

## The Word Gives Peace

Wesley put aside his Bible reading and went to check on his meatloaf. In the kitchen, the older man went about preparing his dinner with the routine and ease that the past 13 years had brought.

He dished up mashed potatoes, corn, and green beans on his plate, along with the meatloaf, and took a seat at the table, neatly set for one. Then Wesley bowed his head for grace. When he took his first forkful of meatloaf, he realized how hungry he was. The meatloaf was good. Still, it wasn't as good as Flora's, he remembered.

Wesley thought of his wife every day since her death 13 years ago. Losing Flora had been the hardest thing that he had ever experienced. The Holy Spirit had always been Wesley's comforter, but he had felt a deeper communion since Flora's passing.

Wesley's daughter wanted him to move to Florida to be with her and her family. "We have room, Daddy," Kala said. "It's not good for you to live alone."

Wesley might consider moving to Florida at some point, but he had his church and some family and friends in Kansas City, Missouri. He would stay here for now.

"I'm not alone, baby girl," Wesley had told his daughter. "The Holy Spirit is always with me, and He will never leave me alone."

**1. When do you not feel the presence of the Holy Spirit? Explain why.**

**2. How does God assure you that His Spirit abides in you when you feel otherwise?**

**3. In what ways is God's Spirit more than your babysitter?**

## The Promise of the Spirit

*John 14:15-17, KJV*

15 If ye love me, keep my commandments.

16 And I will pray the Father, and he shall give you another Comforter, that he may abide with you for ever;

17 Even the Spirit of truth; whom the world cannot receive, because it seeth him not, neither knoweth him: but ye know him; for he dwelleth with you, and shall be in you.

*John 14:15-17, NIV*

<sup>15</sup>"If you love me, keep my commands. <sup>16</sup>And I will ask the Father, and he will give you another advocate to help you and be with you forever— <sup>17</sup>the Spirit of truth. The world cannot accept him, because it neither sees him nor knows him. But you know him, for he lives with you and will be in you."

During the Last Supper (John 13–14), Jesus said that if His disciples truly loved Him, they would obey His teachings (John 14:15). He did not demand their obedience to prove their love for Him. Rather, obedience would be a natural result of loving Him.

Jesus promised that His disciples would have the indwelling of the Spirit. The Holy Spirit would come and make His home in believers so their love could be clearly defined and their obedience could be carefully directed.

The Spirit would come to the believers' aid to help them meet every challenge to their faith. As the "Spirit of truth" (vs. 17), He reveals the truth about God, shows what is true, and leads believers into all truth. In these ways, the Spirit remains ever present to help believers understand, accept, and apply what Jesus commands.

**4. What did Jesus promise He would give to His disciples?**

## The Abiding Presence of the Son

*John 14:18-24, KJV*

18 I will not leave you comfortless: I will come to you.

19 Yet a little while, and the

*John 14:18-24, NIV*

<sup>18</sup>"I will not leave you as orphans; I will come to you.

<sup>19</sup>Before long, the world will

world seeth me no more; but ye see me: because I live, ye shall live also.

20 At that day ye shall know that I am in my Father, and ye in me, and I in you.

21 He that hath my commandments, and keepeth them, he it is that loveth me: and he that loveth me shall be loved of my Father, and I will love him, and will manifest myself to him.

22 Judas saith unto him, not Iscariot, Lord, how is it that thou wilt manifest thyself unto us, and not unto the world?

23 Jesus answered and said unto him, If a man love me, he will keep my words: and my Father will love him, and we will come unto him, and make our abode with him.

24 He that loveth me not keepeth not my sayings: and the word which ye hear is not mine, but the Father's which sent me.

not see me anymore, but you will see me. Because I live, you also will live. <sup>20</sup>On that day you will realize that I am in my Father, and you are in me, and I am in you. <sup>21</sup>Whoever has my commands and keeps them is the one who loves me. The one who loves me will be loved by my Father, and I too will love them and show myself to them."

<sup>22</sup>Then Judas (not Judas Iscariot) said, "But, Lord, why do you intend to show yourself to us and not to the world?"

<sup>23</sup>Jesus replied, "Anyone who loves me will obey my teaching. My Father will love them, and we will come to them and make our home with them. <sup>24</sup>Anyone who does not love me will not obey my teaching. These words you hear are not my own; they belong to the Father who sent me."

Jesus assured His disciples that He would not abandon them as "orphans" (vs. 18). In fact, after His death and resurrection, He appeared to them several times before His ascension. These appearances were only for believers, to strengthen their faith and persuade them that Jesus would never leave them alone in this world.

Once again, Jesus emphasized that it is not enough for believers simply to have affection for Him in their hearts. True love for Him is demonstrated when they keep His

teachings in their daily lives. When believers show this kind of love for Jesus, they enjoy three specific blessings: the love of the Father, the love of the Son, and a deeper knowledge of Jesus.

The Messiah's statements puzzled one of His disciples. His first name was "Judas" (vs. 22), though he was not "Iscaiot," the betraying disciple who had left earlier (13:30). The faithful disciple Judas asked Jesus why He would show Himself to them but not to everyone else in the world.

Jesus did not answer Judas's question directly, for the disciples would learn soon enough the ultimate purpose of Jesus' earthly ministry. He was more concerned about their relationship with Him. So, once again, He stated that if they loved Him, they would obey His teachings.

In addition, both the Father and the Son would come to believers and make their home with them. In contrast, those who did not obey Jesus' teaching showed that they really did not love Him and had rejected the Father. To accept the Son is to accept the Father, and to reject the Son is to reject the Father.

**5.** *In what sense would Jesus come back to His followers?*

**6.** *What connection did Jesus make between love and obedience?*

**7.** *What pledge did Jesus make concerning the Father?*

## The Son's Return to the Father

*John 14:25-29, KJV*

25 These things have I spoken unto you, being yet present with you.

26 But the Comforter, which is the Holy Ghost, whom the Father will send in my name, he shall teach you all things, and bring all things to your remembrance, whatsoever I have said unto you.

*John 14:25-29, NIV*

<sup>25</sup>"All this I have spoken while still with you. <sup>26</sup>But the Advocate, the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in my name, will teach you all things and will remind you of everything I have said to you.

<sup>27</sup>Peace I leave with you;

27 Peace I leave with you, my peace I give unto you: not as the world giveth, give I unto you. Let not your heart be troubled, neither let it be afraid.

28 Ye have heard how I said unto you, I go away, and come again unto you. If ye loved me, ye would rejoice, because I said, I go unto the Father: for my Father is greater than I.

29 And now I have told you before it come to pass, that, when it is come to pass, ye might believe.

my peace I give you. I do not give to you as the world gives. Do not let your hearts be troubled and do not be afraid.

<sup>28</sup>“You heard me say, ‘I am going away and I am coming back to you.’ If you loved me, you would be glad that I am going to the Father, for the Father is greater than I. <sup>29</sup>I have told you now before it happens, so that when it does happen you will believe.”

Jesus covered a wide range of issues, which verse 25 refers to as “all this.” Just as the Father had sent His Son into the world, He would also send the Spirit to dwell permanently within Jesus’ followers. This “Advocate” (vs. 26) would instruct believers by helping them recall all that Jesus taught. The Spirit, having been sent in Jesus’ name, would officially represent Him on His behalf.

As Jesus was about to depart from His disciples, He bestowed on them His “peace” (vs. 27)—not the absence of conflict and adversity, but the assurance of God’s grace, regardless of the situations His followers experienced. His presence through the Spirit would strengthen their hearts.

Jesus reminded the Eleven that while He was “going away” (vs. 28) from them, He also promised to return. Because His disciples genuinely “loved” (vs. 28) the Son, they would come to rejoice that He was going to the Father in heaven. The Son would voluntarily submit Himself to the Father’s redemptive plan through His death at Calvary.

**8. What would enable Jesus’ followers to continue to grow in their faith?**

**9. What did Jesus want His “peace” (John 14:27) to do for His disciples?**

## Filled with the Holy Spirit!

How absolutely astounding is the image of the Spirit of God hovering over the waters while the almighty Creator brought the universe into existence (see Gen. 1:2)! What is equally amazing is that this same Spirit resides in us at this very moment! To truly comprehend this reality is breathtaking to behold!

Nevertheless, how often do we neglect or forget the fact that God's Spirit dwells in us? How often do we neglect the Holy Spirit when we encounter worldly temptations? How often do we forget the Holy Spirit when we endure grievous hardships? How often do we neglect the Holy Spirit when we study Scripture? How often do we forget the Holy Spirit when we seek God's guidance?

Moreover, as Christians, most of us tend to exalt heroes such as Moses, Elijah, and Peter, who parted the Red Sea (see Exodus 13:17-22), caused fire to burn the sacrifices on Mount Carmel (see 1 Kings 18:16-46), and raised Tabitha from the dead (see Acts 9:32-43)? As righteous as Moses, Elijah, and Peter were, they were still the servants of God, whose Spirit brought these miracles to pass. Without the Holy Spirit, none of these events would have occurred.

So, too, in our own lives, without the Holy Spirit, we would be spiritually lost and powerless. Praise God! The Holy Spirit is with us to comfort us, to guide us, and to help us overcome any ordeal or challenge. Therefore, "Be filled with the Spirit" (Eph. 5:18).

**10.** *What one word describes how you feel about the Holy Spirit abiding in you? Explain why you chose this word.*

**11.** *What does it mean to "be filled with the Spirit"?*

**12.** *How can the Holy Spirit deliver Christians from feelings of despair?*

## Following the Spirit

During the Last Supper, Jesus promised the apostles that He would ask His heavenly Father to send the Spirit of truth to be with them after His departure from this world. God's Spirit would not only be an Advocate on their behalf but also a Comforter during times of hardship. And so, too, the Holy Spirit is with us as He was with them.

► *Pray today and the rest of this week for the Holy Spirit to comfort and protect you. Also, look for where He is guiding you to new opportunities of service and people who need to find Jesus.*

### KEY VERSE

And I will pray the Father, and he shall give you another Comforter, that he may abide with you for ever. —John 14:16, KJV

“And I will ask the Father, and he will give you another advocate to help you and be with you forever.” —John 14:16, NIV

### DAILY BIBLE READINGS FOR THIS WEEK'S LESSON

#### Week of August 1 through August 7

(See *The Quiet Hour* and *Cross* devotionals on these passages.)

- Mon.** Psalm 90:1-12—The Lord, Our Dwelling Place.
- Tue.** 1 John 2:12-17—To Love God Is to Know God.
- Wed.** 1 John 5:1-5—Faith Is the Victory.
- Thu.** Isaiah 43:14-21—God Will Do a New Thing.
- Fri.** Isaiah 55:1-5—Come, You Who Thirst.
- Sat.** Romans 8:31-39—More Than Conquerors.
- Sun.** Revelation 21:1-9—God Will Dwell with His People.