Advent 2023

The Work of the Holy Spirit

John 15:26-27

Mike K Colaw

Production Notes:

* Green on the screen.
* Have Julia’s picture ready for the intro and the closing.

We are in a series where we are working through each of the big ideas in the Bible. We are using this season of Advent to identify with those who waited in the Old Testament for the coming Messiah. What does it mean to wait well?

One of the greatest gifts God has given us to wait well for His second arrival is the gift of the Holy Spirit.

Today we are going to talk about the purpose of the Holy Spirit.

Let me pose today’s purpose as a question.

What is the purpose of the Holy Spirit?

I want to show you one of my favorite pictures.

It’s a picture of Julia and I holding hands walking through a park. Let me tell you how much I love being a parent. In this sweet picture it looks like she is pulling me along. In her mind she maybe was. She was so full of joy! If you look closely, we have moved from the park grass to the parking lot pavement. What looks like her pulling me along is actually me tempering her pace to watch out for cars.

The Holy Spirit is called the “helper”.

The Greek word used for "helper" in John 15:26 is "Παράκλητος" (Parakletos). This term is often translated as "Helper," "Advocate," or "Comforter" in English versions of the Bible. It carries the connotation of someone who offers assistance, support, or counsel, and in the context of this verse, refers to the Holy Spirit.

Here is the key catch.

The Holy Spirit doesn’t come to help you center your life around you. The Holy Spirit comes to help direct your steps towards God.

Why is this so important?

Lectio:

John‬

“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. And you also will bear witness, because you have been with me from the beginning.“

A quick survey of the Bible gives us evidence of what the Holy Spirit is helping us to do.

1. The Holy Spirit opens our minds and hearts to understand God.
   1. 2 Timothy 3:16: “All Scripture is breathed out by God and profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, and for training in righteousness.”
   2. 2 Peter 1:21: “For no prophecy was ever produced by the will of man, but men spoke from God as they were carried along by the Holy Spirit.”
2. The Holy Spirit empowers us to do God’s work.
   1. Romans 8:11: “If the Spirit of him who raised Jesus from the dead dwells in you, he who raised Christ Jesus from the dead will also give life to your mortal bodies through his Spirit who dwells in you.”
   2. Acts 1:8: “But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you, and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the end of the earth.”
3. The Holy Spirit intercedes on our behalf before God.
   1. Romans 8:26: “Likewise the Spirit helps us in our weakness. For we do not know what to pray for as we ought, but the Spirit himself intercedes for us with groanings too deep for words.”
4. The Holy Spirit is the comforter and counselor.
   1. John 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 have said to you.”
5. The Holy Spirit convicts us of sin.
   1. John 16:8: “And when he comes, he will convict the world concerning sin and righteousness and judgment.”
6. The Holy Spirit regenerates and sanctifies us.
   1. Titus 3:5: “He saved us, not because of works done by us in righteousness, but according to his own mercy, by the washing of regeneration and renewal of the Holy Spirit.”
   2. 2 Thessalonians 2:13: “But we ought always to give thanks to God for you, brothers beloved by the Lord, because God chose you as the firstfruits to be saved, through sanctification by the Spirit and belief in the truth.”
7. The Holy Spirit gives us spiritual gifts to do his good works.
   1. 1 Corinthians 12:4-11: “Now there are varieties of gifts, but the same Spirit; and there are varieties of service, but the same Lord; and there are varieties of activities, but it is the same God who empowers them all in everyone. To each is given the manifestation of the Spirit for the common good…” (continues to list various gifts).

Meditatio:

Imagine a trampoline with hundreds of little round nerf balls on it. Now imagine I place a bowling ball in the center. Everything on that trampoline will begin rolling towards the middle. In the same way the Holy Spirit works as a gravity that begins to pull everything towards God.

The Holy Spirit works to pull your will into alignment with God.

The Holy Spirit works to pull your work into alignment with God.

The Holy Spirit works to pull your words into alignment with God.

Final Thoughts:

Can you put the picture of me holding Julia’s hand up again?

There is a parking lot full of cars she is running quickly into. Life to the full for her doesn’t come from her directing me but me directing her. It is for her absolute joy that I take her hand.

Jonathan Edwards believed that the Holy Spirit was God’s Delight poured out over man, we only need to grab God’s hand and dance with Him.

*“It appears that the Holy Spirit is the holiness or excellency and delight of God, because our communion with God, and with Christ, consists in our partaking of the Holy Ghost: 2 Cor. 13:14; 1 Cor. 6:17; 1 John 3:24. The oil that was upon Aaron’s head ran down to the skirts of his garments. The Spirit, which Christ, our head, has without measure is communicated to his church and people. The sweet perfumed oil signified Christ’s excellency, and sweet delight. Phil. 2:1.”-* Jonathan Edwards[[1]](#footnote-2)

At this point I know a common question is this.

“Pastor Mike, I am praying for clarity on something and I feel like God hasn’t made a way yet.”

What is the last place of obedience that He has made clear? Be faithful there until he makes a new way.

Actio:

Next Steps Cards:

Is there a place of continued obedience or new obedience the Holy Spirit is pulling your heart towards?

1. Edwards, Jonathan. “The Holy Spirit.” In The Works of Jonathan Edwards, Volume 2: Religious Affections, 339-340. New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1959. [↑](#footnote-ref-2)